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The Spade and the Bible

Archeological Discoveries Support
the Old Book

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"Victory in Christ," "The Saviour
of the World"*

Introduction by
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To
MY WIFE
Constant Companion
Devoted Helper

The author acknowledges, with due appreciation, the courtesy of authors and publishers in granting permission for his use of extracts from various sources. The footnotes will indicate that it has been his purpose to give full and definite references for all such material, with the purpose of encouraging his readers to give further study to this most interesting subject.

INTRODUCTION

ONE evening in September, 1891, as a new student who had just arrived from a distance of nearly two thousand miles, I was ushered into the presence of the man who has now added this volume to his other literary achievements. I was then just a green freshman, very much embarrassed in the presence of the President of the College, a man who had already attained eminence as a scholar and as an executive. I shall not attempt the impossible task of describing the feelings of a romantic boy on such an occasion. It may suffice to say that, although I remained only two years at this institution at that time, I can never forget nor repay the profound and lasting influence toward higher ideals which President W. W. Prescott began to exert over my own life from that day and onward.

On another evening nearly twenty years later, I was walking alone on one of the streets of the national Capital when my old-time mentor overtook me, and in the course of conversation he suggested that I write out a brief pamphlet along the lines of my first book which had then been out a few years and had practically fallen dead from the press. This was a profound encouragement to an embryonic writer, coming as it did from one who was at that time the leading editor of an internationally known publishing house. The suggestion thus made resulted in a small volume which appeared in 1911. But more than one of my subsequent books have been critically (and sympathetically) read as editor by the same kindly friend of so many developing authors. And I am now asked by him to read in manuscript form his latest volume.

Again I shall not attempt the impossible task of describing my sense of the high honor which he has thus conferred on me. I must content myself with a few brief words regarding the urgent need of just such a book as he has here prepared.

The great modern apostasy which has been slowly engulfing the occidental world for almost a century, showed itself first in the form of a destructive criticism of the historical aspects of

the books of the Old Testament. The objective evidences in refutation of these noisy claims of the "critics" and in attestation of the historical trustworthiness of these ancient Hebrew documents, are embraced under the general term "Archeology." Huge piles of books have been written on the discoveries which have been made in Bible lands; but too often these books have been written to be read by specialists and have been chiefly concerned with reporting the minute details of one or two particular localities and the personal work of their authors. There has long been a need for a work of a more general character, a work which would survey the entire field of these discoveries and which would be especially concerned to show how these discoveries have repeatedly vindicated those statements in the Bible which have been the chief points of attack by the destructive "critics." Such a work we now have in this volume.

That it represents the prolonged work of a ripe scholar of unswerving faith in the Book of God, will be understood without any words of mine. That it is sadly needed by all Christian believers, but especially by young ministers and other Christian workers, is equally self-evident. That it is now available for general use, ought to be a matter for thankfulness by all of us.

I commend this volume to all who wish to be sure of their bearings in these days of mental unrest and perplexity. The most urgent need of every one of us is to have our faith established in what God has spoken.

GEORGE MCCREADY PRICE.

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I

THE OLD FAITH AND THE NEW DISCOVERIES

Great mounds that had lain untouched for millenniums have been dug up and thoroughly examined, and amid the debris of these buried and forgotten ruins have been found not only the remains of palaces, temples, monuments, and great buildings, but immense libraries, inscribed bricks, vases, tablets, and mural inscriptions, which have given us the history and chronology of those ancient and almost unknown people, with their manners and customs, their social surroundings and scientific knowledge, and their very thoughts and emotions.—MARK B. CHAPMAN.

IN the year 1932, when this book was written, we were facing such a condition of perplexity and uncertainty as no merely human philosophy could satisfactorily explain and for which it could provide no adequate remedy. What were regarded as undeniable truths in the days of our fathers were being seriously questioned by many and positively denied by others. This is notably true in the religious field. A destructive criticism, usually known as "Modernism," has proclaimed its "assured results" with a tone of certainty which has disturbed the peace of mind of a wide circle of professed Christians whose foundations of faith were none too securely laid, and has written a large question mark after the revealed truths of the Christian religion. Scholarly investigators in the field of physical science, whose pronouncements command attention the world over, have unreservedly committed themselves to the so-called fact of evolution as the only reliable explanation of the present order of things in the material world, and not content with applying this radical philosophy in their own sphere, they have invaded the entirely distinct field of revelation, and have assumed the prerogative of denying the supernatural. Ignoring the fundamental principle for acquiring knowledge of spiritual truth, as stated by the great Teacher, "If any man willeth to do his will, he shall know of the teaching, whether it be of God," these heralds of a new order discredit the Scriptures because they not simply discredit but positively contradict the conclusions of a godless evolution. Thus the issue is squarely put up to us. Shall we believe in the

God of the Bible, the Creator of all things, who "worketh all things after the counsel of his will," or shall we accept the god of evolution, the merciless law of an impersonal force supposed to be inherent in all matter? Shall we dismiss from our experience the God of love who has revealed Himself as our Redeemer, and trust in our own power as applied by our own wisdom to deliver us from the moral chaos in which we find ourselves? The demonstrated failure of human resources in the current crisis ought to suggest the right answer to these crucial questions.

The present situation is not due to a sudden, cataclysmic reversal of the old order. "Nevertheless, despite all superficial continuity, a remarkable change has come about within the last seventy-five years. The change is nothing less than the substitution of paganism for Christianity as the dominant view of life. Seventy-five years ago, Western civilization, despite inconsistencies, was still predominantly Christian; today it is predominantly pagan." Paganism does not necessarily imply ignorance and a lack of culture and refinement. Paganism is the philosophy of self-development, the inherent ability to meet one's own need wholly independent of any outside aid. The religion of paganism consists in placating the anger of the gods by humanly devised methods, so that they shall not hinder human efforts, and then lifting one's self to higher levels of attainment. What paganism was to Greece, with its heroic achievements, its unsurpassed art, and its enduring poetry, reappears in our day under the guise of "Modernism." It involves an utterly false view of the present order, and a false philosophy as the hope of the world.

It is worthy of note that during these seventy-five years which have witnessed this transformation from a Christian to a pagan civilization, such remarkable discoveries have been made in Bible lands as have most convincingly testified to the accuracy and reliability of the Scriptures when they deal with such facts and events as can be verified by searching investigation. During this time a new field of research has been opened up and developed. Societies for the advancement of knowledge have been organized in the leading countries of the world, and some men of wealth have financed such undertakings, while others have furnished the means necessary for unorganized efforts, a special objective being the study of ancient civilizations by uncovering

cities long buried in the wreckage and debris of their ancient dwellers, and by the recovery and the deciphering of documents or fragments of documents, inscriptions on metal or stone or monuments, and miscellaneous writings, the most of which employed strange characters with hitherto unknown meanings. In this way voices from the rocks and the sands of long ago, which have remained silent for many centuries, are now bearing unimpeachable testimony to the trustworthiness of the writings of apostles and prophets. Surely all this is in the providence of God, who, in this day when doubts are being broadcasted, is using every available means to leave without excuse those who reject the revelation of His saving truth.

The territory which has been the principal field for this research is that which is included between the Tigris River and the Mediterranean Sea in western Asia, while a large emphasis has been placed upon Palestine and Egypt. The explorations carried on in these countries within the memory of those now living have uncovered much valuable material which has made it possible for scholars to write reliable histories of nations whose very existence has formerly been disputed; but while reference will be made in a general way to such facts, the main purpose of this volume is to show the value of these discoveries in confirming the accuracy and reliability of the Scriptures. Not so long ago it was quite the fashion with skeptical writers to assert with an air of finality that the Bible abounded in historical errors. They claimed that the book of Genesis was full of myths and unreliable traditions gathered from ancient peoples—a mass of folklore; that the religion of Israel was almost wholly derived from ancient Babylon; and that the sacrificial system was simply an adaptation of the rites of their heathen neighbors. The book of Daniel was a favorite stamping ground for this class of critics. Inasmuch as no reference to Belshazzar had up to that time been found in secular history, the whole fifth chapter of Daniel was declared to be the product of a later pseudo-Daniel, who concocted this incident in order to encourage the Maccabees to believe in a Deity who would deliver them from their enemies. In short these writers attempted to reduce the Bible to the level of the myths, the folk-lore and the oracles of the heathen.

Now the situation is quite changed. I do not mean to say that the critics have been convinced of their skeptical folly. Far

from it. They are the same critics now as before, but they have been compelled to abandon much of their former ground and to change their tactics. The reliability of certain definite statements in the Bible has now become a minor matter. The acceptance by the higher critics of the principle of evolution in the realm of religion has led to the rejection of the Bible as a whole, so far as its authority as a divine revelation is concerned. Evolution denies a special creation by a personal Creator; it denies the reality of sin; it denies the need of an atoning Saviour; and it denies any such future catastrophe as the destruction of the material world by fire, and the creation of a new heavens and a new earth. Inasmuch as the Scriptures reveal these things as basic truths, the essential features of the Christian revelation, the modern thinkers are now in quest of a new god, a modern god, and a new religion, which, according to its latest advocates, is in reality a return to the rank heathenism of the most primitive peoples.

Now I wish to be clearly understood. I do not claim that the accepted results of research in the field of archeology have demonstrated that there is a personal God, and that the writings included in the canon of Scripture are a divine revelation, and that Christianity is the only true religion. Such a claim would be just as unwarranted as the claims of the skeptics. What, then, has archeology achieved in this field of controversy? The answer is clear. It has shown by such evidence as cannot be discredited by any speculative philosophy or any unproven theories of modern science, that the historical statements in the Scriptures are reliable in the many cases where archeology has made available the contemporaneous testimony of various kinds bearing upon the same facts. This, I am confident, will be demonstrated in the future chapters of this book.

I do not base my faith upon the writings of archeologists, although I have read them with interest and profit. The existence of God cannot be scientifically proven. "Canst thou by searching find out God?" In order that we may know Him, He must reveal Himself; and this He has done in the person of His Son, who has actually entered into human history. Christianity is the secret of the ages, which human reason did not discover. Sin is the outworking of a person, and is revealed to us on every hand in the experience of daily life. Christianity

is embodied and revealed in a Person, Jesus Christ, a historical Being in behalf of whom there is more and more convincing testimony than for any other character in history. All this I believed before I entered into the field of archeology, but I have found my faith confirmed and my confidence strengthened as I have read the testimony of ancient documents to the authenticity of the Scriptures in matters capable of being established by such testimony. I therefore feel that it may be helpful to others, if I can present to them in a simple way some of the findings of archeology.

It certainly is an instructive example of the directing providence of God that just in this time of such marked apostasy ancient kings should come forth from their tombs, ancient cities should disclose their libraries, the official correspondence of the rulers of ancient provinces should be read by scholars now versed in their languages, and the unofficial writings of the common people in the time of our Lord and His apostles should be dug out of the dust heaps,—all testifying, separately and unitedly, to the historical accuracy of the Scriptures, and throwing a flood of light upon the correct meaning of many hitherto puzzling words in the New Testament writings. Is all this the product of mere chance? The humble believer in the loving interest of a kind Father for His children will, in the most emphatic way, say, No! A thousand times, No! He who cares for the sparrows, will confirm the faith of the sincere lover of the truth. He who caused these testimonies in behalf of the Scriptures to be securely buried so many centuries ago, has girded the archeologist for his work and has guided his spade so that it might confirm the foundations of Christian belief. Let us thankfully recognize His tender compassion.

There is another phase of this subject to which I will direct attention. It is what I regard as the tyranny of modern science. I will try to make clear what this expression means. During the greater part of the middle ages the authority of the Roman Catholic Church was quite generally recognized. Anyone who defied this assumed authority exposed himself to serious trouble. The Reformation of the sixteenth century broke this galling yoke and set millions free. In recent years a skeptical science has assumed a similar rôle of dictator in matters of religious belief. I do not make this charge against all scientists. Some have

maintained their own Christian experience, and have refrained from sowing the seeds of unbelief. For this attitude they should be duly honored. But they are the exceptions. The great majority of those who occupy the front seats in the academies of science and to whom a large meed of praise might be deservedly given for their achievements in their chosen field, have seemed to take it for granted that their being experts in that field gained for them the right of posing as experts in theological matters, and they have consequently asserted with a positive emphasis that where the Bible disagrees with their deductions from the alleged facts of science, it is proved to be unreliable.

This critical and condemnatory spirit is the more unwarranted in view of the recent admissions concerning the uncertainty of science itself. A writer has thus stated the case:

Even apart from religious difficulties, there exist weighty reasons for the belief that modern knowledge is not adequate to criticize the Bible. The mere fact that modern knowledge is so progressive in character, and that its conclusions are so constantly being changed, should warn us against any attempt to modify revelation to suit it. It must be remembered that at the beginning of this century many scientists assumed that they knew all there was to be known of the laws of nature. But today Professor Eddington, undoubtedly a leading man of science, writes of 'the appalling and insistent nature of our ignorance' of these laws. And just as we are ignorant of the laws of nature, so we are still ignorant both of ancient history and of most essential matters connected with the Bible.¹

We freely recognize our indebtedness to modern science, and we hold in honor those who have devoted their time and their talents to the attainments in this field, but we cannot concede that they have thereby earned the right to deny the inerrancy of the Bible, or to establish on their own authority the religion of Modernism in the place of Christianity. Jesus, the greatest scientist the world has ever known, plainly declared that He did not come to destroy either the ancient law or the teachings of the ancient prophets, but rather to fulfil. His example is worthy of imitation by modern scientists. The assumption on the part of some recognized scholars in the scientific field that as the result of their investigations and their unwarranted deductions in some disputed fields, they can speak *ex cathedra* in the

¹ Sir Chas. Marston in *The Sunday School Times*, Nov. 14, 1931.

religious area, and by their authority can overthrow both the foundation and the superstructure of Christianity—this is what I designate the tyranny of modern science. Human reason cannot maintain authority in the field of religion. God has spoken. There is no basis for an appeal from His word to the conclusions of a skeptical science.

In the very nature of the case this modest volume will not attempt to deal at length with any single feature of research in Biblical archeology. It is written for everyday people, with the hope that it will not merely interest them in a general way, but that it will enable them to read the Scriptures with a greater sense of their historical reality, and to grasp the vividness with which some of their teachings are presented, as light is thrown upon the then current meaning of some of the leading words used by New Testament writers. Many of the deepest truths are conveyed in an unaffected style, using the common language of the people of apostolic times. "The splendid simplicity and homeliness of New Testament Greek demonstrate the peculiar charm of the sacred book."

The libraries of Nineveh and Babylon, the royal palace of the Hittite kings, the official correspondence of vassal rulers in Palestine in which Israel is mentioned by name, the inscriptions of official Crete, the witness of official documents to the historicity of Belshazzar, the uncovering of the Jericho of Joshua's time and of the Ephesus of Paul's time, the identification of Sodom and Gomorrah, the almost unlimited supply of papyri from Egypt and their bearing upon the language of the New Testament writings,—these are a few suggestions taken at random of the interesting revelations which have been made by the spade of the archeologist, and which are discussed in the following pages. New fields are constantly being opened up, and old fields are being further developed, so that every year witnesses an accumulation of additional facts and valuable materials made available in current publications, both transient and permanent, for those who wish to pursue this subject further.

The works of a wide range of authors have been freely consulted in the preparation of this volume, and the indebtedness of the writer to recognized authorities in the archeological field is clearly shown by the large number of duly credited quotations found in the text. One object in this method of treating the

subject is to supply to students reliable statements at first hand, and also to lead inquirers to a further investigation of the authorities thus cited. It will be readily recognized by the reader that this volume is a mere introduction to the subject of archeology, touching only upon some of the outstanding features of this intensely interesting field of investigation.

II

THE ANCIENT TEXTS

THE SOURCE MATERIAL—THE DOCUMENTS FOR STUDY

Nothing in the whole course of last century is more remarkable than the recovery of the knowledge of ancient civilizations through the labors of explorers and the successful decipherment of old inscriptions. . . . It must be accounted a wonderful providence of God that, at a time when so much is being said and done to discredit the Old Testament, so marvelous a series of discoveries, bearing directly on matters contained in its pages, should have been made.—The Problem of the Old Testament, JAMES ORR.

THE ancient texts which have been discovered during the last century and which testify so convincingly to the historical accuracy of the Holy Scriptures, may be divided into three general classes—the inscriptions, the papyri, and the ostraca. It may contribute to a clearer understanding of our subject if we should first give attention to the general content of these three terms.

The inscriptions include the texts which have been found inscribed upon metal, stone, wood, or clay in many places, covering a long period of time. "The bulk of the inscriptions are on stone, but to these must be added inscriptions cast or engraved in bronze or scratched on tablets of lead or gold, a few wax tablets, the scribblings (graffiti) found on walls, and the texts on coins and medals. These inscriptions, of which there are hundreds of thousands, are discovered on the site of the ancient civilized settlements of the Græco-Roman world, in its fullest extent from the Rhine to the upper course of the Nile and from the Euphrates to Britain. Inscriptions have been noted and studied since the days of the Renaissance, and in the eighteenth century there was one scholar, Johann Walch, who pressed Greek inscriptions into the service of New Testament exegesis."

Perhaps the best known of these inscriptions are the Moabite stone, the Rosetta stone, and the Behistun inscription, concern-

ing which interesting information will be given in the next chapter. Quite a portion of the ordinary inscriptions are of an official character, and the language used is more polished than that of the common people, but they have served a very useful purpose, especially in the field of chronology. For a goodly number of years these inscriptions were regarded as among the curiosities of antiquity, and the scholars of those days made no serious effort to translate into modern languages the curious characters which greeted them. Such a field, however, was too alluring to remain long unentered, and some shrewd guesses on the part of various linguists were followed by patient study, and rewarded with results which have stood the tests of critical scholarship. The inscriptions in Crete have thus far defied all attempts to decipher them, but with this exception the scrawls and the picture language of the literary peoples of the ancient East have been translated into the leading modern languages of the present century.

"To unearth the relics of past ages is but fruitless toil without the key to the reading of their witness, yet no such key had been yielded up by Palestine's buried ruins until very recently. Egyptology had long since become a science through the decipherment of hieroglyphics, and Assyriology by the mastery of the cuneiform script, since by these aids a ruin could be dated, and its testimony given a definite place in ancient history. In Palestine, where a single mound might reveal remains of five or six successive towns, not one could be dated within half a millennium, owing to the scarcity of inscriptions. Tablets, documents, even epitaphs, were rare before the days of Alexander, and (from Jewish sources) none too frequent even thereafter. But Petrie began in 1890 to classify the different types of Palestinian pottery as following a chronological order; and when he and his successors had fairly established a scale of succession, the means of dating the principal types came to light only a dozen years ago."

Various illustrations of the value of the inscriptions discovered in many countries of the East will be found in later chapters. As a whole they have contributed greatly to a clearer interpretation and a better understanding of Biblical language, Biblical history, and Biblical customs.

When you pick up your fountain pen filled with a fine quality

of ink, and begin to write a letter or a more lengthy document on the glossy surface of linen paper, do you ever consider what materials an ancient writer had at hand for doing the same thing? When the aged apostle John wrote his third epistle, he mentioned the use of "ink and pen," but we must give to the Greek words which he used the meaning then attached to them. His ink "was made of soot, mixed with gum, and diluted with water. A color, which had a wonderful lasting power, was thus produced, as may be seen by examining any of the recently recovered texts. At the same time, the ink, through not sinking into the fibers of the papyrus, was easily washed out, when still fresh." We are therefore not surprised to find that, in the interest of economy, many sheets were washed out and used a second time. The pen of the apostle was doubtless a reed sharpened at the end and softened by the application of moisture, quite possibly by holding it in his mouth for a short time. At first this pen was not split at the end as ours are, but by the end of the first century this improvement was made. With such a pen and ink we can readily understand why the lines were rather heavy, and that delicate shading was quite impossible.

In the place of the writing paper so familiar to us the writers of apostolic times used what is now called papyrus, a writing material made from the pith of the plant bearing the same name. "The pith of the stem was first cut into long strips, which were laid down vertically to form an outward or lower layer. Over this a corresponding number of strips were placed horizontally, and the two layers were then pressed together to form a single sheet, the process being assisted by a preparation of glue moistened, when possible, with the turbid water of the Nile, which was supposed to add strength to it. After being dried in the sun, and rubbed down with ivory or a small shell, the sheet was ready for use." (Milligan.) Sometimes these sheets were fastened together lengthwise so as to form one long sheet, which was usually rolled up for convenience in handling it. And so the prophet Jeremiah was instructed, "Take thee a roll of a book, and write therein." In some cases the sheets were fastened together somewhat after the manner of a modern book, but without any stiff covers.

"In itself, papyrus as a writing material was originally an Egyptian manufacture, and at the beginning of the Christian

era had already a long history behind it. The earliest extant papyrus is one found at Sakkara in 1893, containing accounts dated in the reign of Assa B. c. 3580-36. And from this period down to the ninth century after Christ countless papyrus documents have been recovered in Egypt, where they owe their preservation to the singularly dry character of the climate."

The recovery and the painstaking study of the almost countless papyri have wrought a radical change in the interpretation of the Greek of the New Testament. The old grammars and lexicons have been practically superseded by new ones which embody the results of half a century of intense research. It is not within the province of this volume to enter into a discussion of the technical features of this language problem, but a brief statement of the benefits which have accrued from the scholarly examination of the papyri may be of helpful interest:

But confining ourselves again to their relation to Christian history, it is impossible not to recognize the importance of having the 'enrolment' of Luke 2: 1, 2 illustrated by the recovery of a large number of similar enrolments or census-returns, known by the same name, and even the method of the enumeration by the return of each man to his own city (ver. 3) confirmed by the discovery of an exactly analogous order. When too we find a Prefect releasing a prisoner in deference to the wishes of the multitude, or the summary of a trial with the speech of the prosecuting counsel, we are at once reminded of what took place in the case of our Lord (Mk. 15: 15) and of St. Paul (Acts 24: 2ff.). Or, to pass to a later period in the history of the Church, while the persecution of the Christians under Decius, and the consequent demand for *libelli*, or certificates of conformity to the state-religion, were previously well known, it is surely a great gain to be able to look upon actual specimens of these *libelli*, attested by the signatures of the *libellatici* themselves, and countersigned by the official commission that had been appointed to examine them.

The value of the papyri, however, for the Biblical student is very far from being exhausted in ways such as these. They have added directly to his materials not only a certain number of Biblical texts, but also several highly important fragments of extra-canonical writings, including the so-called *Logia* of Jesus, which have attracted such widespread attention. Nor is this all, but the indirect aid which they constantly afford for the interpretation of our Greek Bible is perhaps even more striking. . . . It may be convenient to recapitulate here that this aid is to be looked for principally in three directions.

(1) In the matter of *language* we have now abundant proof that the so-called 'peculiarities' of Biblical Greek are due simply to the fact that the writers of the New Testament for the most part made use of the ordinary colloquial Greek, the *Koiné* of their day. . . .

(2) The *form* again, which the New Testament writers so frequently adopted for the conveyance of religious truth, is reflected in the clearest manner in the private letters that have been rescued from the sands of Egypt. . . .

(3) Once more, the papyri are of the utmost value in enabling us to picture the *general environment*, social and religious, of the earliest followers of Christianity. These followers belonged for the most part, though by no means exclusively, to the humbler and poorer classes of the population, whom the ordinary historian of the period did not think it worth his while to notice. But now by means of their own autographic letters and documents we can see them in all the varied relationships of everyday life and thought.¹

“The great bulk of the papyri are of a non-literary character: legal documents of the most various kinds, *e. g.*, leases, accounts, receipts, marriage contracts and wills, attestations, official edicts, petitions for justice, records of judicial proceedings, and a large number of documents relating to taxes, then letters and notes, exercise books, charms, horoscopes, diaries, etc., etc. The contents of these non-literary fragments are as varied as life itself. The Greek fragments, numbering many thousands, embrace a period of about a thousand years. The oldest go back to early Ptolemean times, *i. e.*, the third century B. C.; the most recent carry us far into the Byzantine period. On these papyri the whole eventful history of Græco-Roman Egypt in those thousand years passes before our eyes. These Greek MSS., together with a large number of Demotic, Coptic, Arabic, Latin, Hebrew, and Persian, to say nothing of the old Hieroglyphic papyri, possess an importance for the study of antiquities, in the widest sense, about which there should be no possibility of a difference of opinion. They enable us to revive a long period of ancient life. They testify to the actual conditions of the past with a truth and candor that can be claimed for no ancient writer and for but very few ancient inscriptions.”

The broken pieces of pottery found in the rubbish heaps of many cities are called ostraca. Their value consists in the fact that they were used by the poorer classes in the place of the more expensive papyri as writing material. It may seem strange to those who have not given study to the subject that brief notes scrawled upon fragments of broken vessels of baked clay, such

¹ *Selections From the Greek Papyri*, pp. xxviii-xxxii. By George Milligan. Courtesy of G. P. Putnam's Sons, Publishers, New York and London.

as are found on some of the ostraca, should have any literary value to the student of antiquity, but it is from this humble source that much valuable help has been obtained in solving the language problem of the New Testament. "The Greek ostraca, extending over a period of about a thousand years, from the time of the first Ptolemies until the beginning of the Arab dominion, have so far proved the most numerous. They are inscribed with texts of the most varied contents—letters, contracts, accounts, orders to pay, edicts, and even copies of classical authors. Roughly speaking, therefore, the inscribed ostraca supply us with the same sort of texts as we already possess in such astonishing abundance in the papyri, except that from the nature of things the texts on potsherds are generally shorter than those on papyrus." (Deissmann.)

It is perhaps unnecessary to go into further detail concerning the nature and value to the archeologist of the inscriptions, the papyri and the ostraca. It is chiefly from these sources that the information has been secured which has made it possible to form a correct judgment concerning the nature of the New Testament Greek, and its proper interpretation, and which has often given a startling vividness to some very familiar passages of Scripture. These statements will find their justification in some of the later chapters of this book.

III

HOW SOME ANCIENT LANGUAGES WERE UNLOCKED

I believe in the spade. It has fed the tribes of mankind. It has furnished them with water, coal, iron and gold. And now it is giving them truth—historic truth—the mines of which have never been opened till our time.—OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES.

SOME letters written in our own days and in our own language are rather hard to read. They look like the scrawling effort of a young boy who is just beginning to use a pen. Perhaps he forgets to put a dot over each i, or to cross each t, or he makes no difference between y and q, and some other letters are so poorly made that the reader is uncertain about many words. But suppose such a scrawler should attempt to write in a foreign language, like the French or the German, in which the same letters are used, then the trouble would be greater. If, however, the careless writer should use strange characters, one of which might stand for a word or even an idea, the trouble would probably become despair.

This is a mere suggestion of the difficulty with which some students of ancient writings have met. But first I must tell briefly how some of these writings were discovered. I can refer to only three or four of the most striking cases. The name Napoleon suggests campaigns in various fields. In 1798 he went to Egypt, and a company of learned men went with him. The next year one of these men was digging near the mouth of the river Nile, not far from the town of Rosetta, and there he found a strange looking granite stone. It was nearly four feet tall, about two and one-half feet wide, and nearly a foot thick. One face of the stone was smooth, and was divided into three parts, one above the other, and upon each part was an inscription. The inscription on the lowest portion was in Greek, and so could be read by the scholars, but the characters on the other two portions were strange and meaningless to them.

It was nearly twenty years before any serious attempt was made to read the two mysterious inscriptions, and then a French

scholar named Champollion entered upon the task on the supposition that what was written in Greek was what was written by the use of strange characters on the other sections. It was a simple matter to suppose this, but quite another matter to prove it. About four years passed before he dared to announce to the world that he had deciphered the hitherto meaningless inscriptions, but the results which followed seemed fully to warrant the patient study which he had made. It was found that one of the languages was the ancient picture writing of the Egyptians, and the other was a later picture language. The first is usually called the hieroglyphic Egyptian, and the second the demotic Egyptian. It was learned from the Greek inscription that the stone dated from about 195 B. C., and was in honor of Ptolemy V, one of the Egyptian rulers. There was no special value in this information, but by deciphering and translating the other two inscriptions this French scholar made it possible to read the history of Egypt as written with these curious characters upon monuments, tablets, in tombs and temples throughout that country. This opened a new field for research and study, the results of which have been most important in confirming many historical statements in the Scriptures. More of this later. This famous stone is called the Rosetta stone.

Let us now leave Egypt and take a trip to Behistun, "a village at the foot of a precipitous peak some 1,700 feet high, in the Zangers range in Persia, on the right bank of the Samas-Ab, a tributary of the Kerkha." The original name was Bagistana, meaning "place of the gods." On the face of this high peak, about 500 feet from its base, Darius I, king of Persia, carved a great inscription in three kinds of ancient writing. Look up. Look sharply. Can you see it? Not distinctly, of course, but you can discern a large surface up there which can be distinguished from the rest of the cliff. There it is. The lower part consists of eight columns about eleven feet high, three of the columns being in the Susian language and five in the Persian. Above these columns is one column in the Babylonian language, and a large sculpture representing Darius putting his foot on the body of Gaumata, who attempted to usurp control of the country.

This Behistun inscription was discovered in 1835 by Henry Rawlinson, a British army officer then located in that region.

He decided to make a copy of it, and he spent parts of four years on this work. Think of the risk and the labor. Not only was the inscription 500 feet from the base of the cliff, but there was a chasm below the cliff about 350 feet deep. How was it possible to copy a very large surface thus located? One fact helped greatly. Just below the inscription was a ledge of rock about fourteen inches wide. Although a part of the edge of this ledge had been worn away, yet it furnished a perilous footing upon which a copyist with a steady nerve might stand. Here Mr. Rawlinson and his assistants did some of the copying. Then a ladder was placed upon the ledge, held steady by helpers, from which more of the surface could be reached. Finally a swing was let down from above, from which Mr. Rawlinson was able to copy the remainder of this great inscription. Four years of difficult and dangerous work by a persevering man! And this was only a beginning, for about eighteen years more passed before he was able to complete a translation of the strange characters which he had copied. Five of the panels were in the Persian language with which Mr. Rawlinson was acquainted, and he deciphered the other panels in the Median and the Babylonian languages by adopting the same principle which made possible the reading of the Rosetta stone, already described. "Thus to Rawlinson is due the decipherment of the cuneiform inscriptions. The greater part of his work was done without the help of books, for for many years he was stationed in places where there were none." This cliff, with its inscriptions, is known as the Behistun rock.

The value of the Behistun findings did not consist in what was written upon the face of the cliff, but rather in the fact that the reading of the languages there found made available to scholars another great field of ancient literature. "This Behistun group was found to sustain the same relation to the cuneiform languages of Babylonia that the Rosetta stone sustained to the tongues of ancient Egypt. It was the key to its ancient life, people, and government."

Now we must visit another place. This time it is Dibon, a town about fifteen miles east of the Dead Sea and about three miles north of the Arnon River in the land of Moab. Here in 1868 a missionary discovered a stone about four feet high, two feet wide, and fourteen inches thick, with all four corners

rounded. On one side of it was an inscription in Phœnician letters. After dickering about a year, the missionary closed a bargain for the stone, the price agreed upon being about \$400.00. In the meantime some of the French residents at Jerusalem heard of the discovery, and offered more than four times this sum for it. This led the superstitious natives to think that so valuable a bit of rock must possess some magical charm, and fearing that they might lose it, they built a fire under it, and after it was well heated they poured cold water upon it, thus breaking it into smaller pieces which they then passed around among themselves. Evidently these Arabs were not learned archeologists. They were charmers rather than scholars, but their charming way of dealing with the stone did not charm the scholars. Fortunately, however, the most of the scattered fragments were afterwards collected and so well fitted together that the inscription could be read.

This memorial stone "was erected by Mesha, king of Moab, to the god Chemosh, about 850 B. C., and commemorates Moab's deliverance from Israel's domination." A portion of this inscription, as found translated in *The Monuments and the Old Testament*,¹ reads thus:

I (am) Mesha, son of Chemoshmelek, king of Moab, the Dibonite. My father ruled over Moab thirty years, and I ruled after my father. And I prepared this monument for Chemosh, at Korkhah. A monument (to celebrate) deliverance, because he saved me from all invaders, and because he let me see (my desire) upon all mine enemies.

Omri (was) king of Israel, and he oppressed Moab many days, for Chemosh was angry with his land.

His son succeeded him, and he also said, 'I will oppress Moab.'

In my days said he (thus): I will see my desire on him and his house, and Israel perished with an everlasting loss.

And Omri took possession of the land of Mehedeba, and dwelt therein during his days, and half the days of his son, forty years.

But Chemosh restored it in my days. I built Baal-Meon, and constructed in it a *pool* (?),

And I built Kirjathan. The Gadites had dwelt in the land from ancient times, and the king of Israel had built for himself Ataroth;

But I warred against the city and took it.

And I slew all (the inhabitants of) the city, a spectacle for Chemosh and for Moab.

¹ By Ira Maurice Price, pp. 144, 145. American Baptist Publication Society.

And I carried off thence the *arel* of Dodeh, and I dragged it before Chemosh in Kerioth.

And I caused to dwell therein the men of Sharon and the men of Meheroth.

And Chemosh said to me: Go take Nebo against Israel.

And I went by night and fought against it from early dawn until high noon.

And I took it and slew all of it, seven thousand men and women, and . . . female slaves; for to Ashtor-Chemosh I had devoted it.

And I took thence the *arels* of Jehovah, and dragged them before Chemosh.

Now the king of Israel had built Jahaz, and he dwelt in it while he waged war against me.

In this part of Mesha's document Israel is mentioned four times; Omri, the king of Israel, is named; Jehovah, the God of Israel, is recognized; and the domination of Omri over Moab is twice spoken of. Here is one of the many instances where the ancient writings confirm the historical trustworthiness of the Bible. More than twenty-five hundred years ago the king of Moab caused a record to be written in which reference is made by name to another king reigning in Israel at the same time who oppressed Moab. From the Scripture record we know that Omri was king of Israel in the time of Mesha, king of Moab, and that he required tribute of the king of Moab. Now after the lapse of many centuries and after the succession of many different rulers in the land of Moab there is casually brought to light the personal testimony of an ancient king who did not dream that he was providing confirmation of the Scriptures for the benefit of a skeptical period then far in the future. I have written "casually," but this is really not correct. Over all history there presides One "who worketh all things after the counsel of his will," and who in many ways has caused even the heathen to witness for Him. Much further evidence of this will appear in later chapters. This memorial stone is called the Moabite stone.

I am dealing with some of these remarkable literary discoveries in their historical order, and we must therefore now return to Egypt. Here we are at Tel-el-Amarna, a town near the river Nile about two hundred miles south of Cairo. Even if we had been traveling in Egypt in 1887, it is hardly likely that we would have visited this place, as it was then hardly

known outside of its own neighborhood. But since then it has been advertised throughout many countries. Why? Not because it was a popular bathing resort with a big dance hall, a movie picture theater, and a number of high class hotels. Oh no! There were no such worthless attractions. It was something really worth while which called public attention to this otherwise insignificant town. In that year a poor peasant woman was digging near there and found some clay tablets which she sold for a very small sum, perhaps enough to provide her with necessary food for a day or two. In a later search others dug out about four hundred more tablets which were sold at rather surprising prices, some of them bringing over seven hundred dollars each.

But of what real value were these old pieces of clay? Why would anyone care for them? They turned out to be of such importance that a book of over two hundred pages, which I now have before me, was devoted to the translation and interpretation of the writing found on them, and they are discussed by practically all of the recent writers on archeology. A brief extract from what one writer says about them may be of interest:

The Tel-el-Amarna tablets can scarcely be valued too highly because of the light which they throw upon political conditions of Egypt and Asia generally at that time, but students of the Bible have a peculiar interest in them because of their reference to no less than twenty cities mentioned in the Old Testament and to Jerusalem and its king, who was a vassal of Egypt.²

Further consideration will be given to these tablets in another chapter. They are usually called the Tel-el-Amarna tablets.

It will of course be quite impossible for me to deal with all the discoveries of a character similar to those already mentioned, but I think I ought to call attention to one more at least. This is what is usually spoken of as the deluge tablet, on which is written the Babylonian tradition concerning the flood. It is the eleventh in a series of tablets found in the library of Ashurbanipal, one of the greatest of the kings of Babylonia, who reigned from 668 to 626 B. C. Earlier critics of the Scriptures seemed to find great delight in trying to prove the mythical

² *Voices From Rocks and Dust Heaps of Bible Lands*, p. 50. By J. A. Huffman. The Standard Press.

nature of the Bible by confidently asserting that writing was a comparatively modern attainment, and that consequently the books of Moses and the prophets were written centuries after these men lived, and were simply a compilation of the myths and traditions common to many primitive peoples. This claim was wholly without foundation, the product of a strong desire to discredit the book of God, and it has been given a death blow by the findings of archeologists. The unearthing of the library of Ashurbanipal was a large contribution to this result. Here is a brief paragraph which gives some information about this library:

The great work of Ashurbanipal was the collection of his library at Nineveh. He sent to all the old temples of Babylonia and had copies made of their incantations, hymns, and epics. These, together with chronicles, medical tablets, dictionaries, etc., he collected in his palace, where they were found by Layard and Rassam [about seventy-five years ago], and form the basis of our knowledge of the Assyrian and Babylonian language, literature, and history.³

I will not discuss here the contents of this deluge tablet, but may be able to do so in another connection.

The Rosetta stone and the Behistun inscription furnished the keys for the reading of some formerly unknown languages, while the Tel-el-Amarna tablets and the deluge tablet and other similar records provided valuable historical and literary information which has enabled scholars to write reliable histories of peoples of whom comparatively little had previously been known with certainty. But to us the most important feature of all this is that these ancient writings in strange looking characters, found in widely separated countries, bear such plain and sure testimony to the correctness of the many historical statements and references found in the Scriptures. Such confirmation of the Bible in this time of doubt and unbelief is most encouraging to all lovers of truth, and for it we should be duly thankful.

³ *Archæology and the Bible*, p. 64. By George A. Barton. By permission of The American Sunday School Union.

IV

THE INSPIRED RECORD AND HEATHEN EPICS

The views held by Babylonian archeologists, while somewhat varied, have generally appeared upon superficial examination to favor this view taken by the radical criticism as to the Babylonian origin of the Mosaic system of sacrifices. The exact facts in the case, however, are that Babylonian archeologists have only, as true archeologists, and not as critics, pointed out the similarities between Babylonian and Mosaic sacrifices. That the similarity was identity in this case has been assumed, not proved.—Moses and the Monuments.—MELVIN GROVE KYLE.

AS we proceed with our study we shall certainly be convinced that the rocks and dust heaps of ancient lands have borne much testimony to the historical accuracy of the Scriptures, but we should not expect too much of them. In their proper field they fulfil a very useful purpose in confirming many statements made in the Bible, but they do not demonstrate that there is an infinite God, and they do not reveal the process of creation. Material things, however old they may be, cannot tell us how they were brought into existence, but they do bear witness to the truth of the scripture records.

The spade of the archeologist has made a very interesting contribution of ancient legends concerning creation, to which we will now give some attention. About fifty years ago a book appeared with the title "The Chaldean Genesis," written by Mr. George Smith, in which he presented what was then known of the so-called Babylonian Epic of Creation. The source from which he derived the material for his book was the library of Ashurbanipal, king of Assyria B. C. 668-626, which had been discovered at Nineveh, his capital. During the past half century a number of scholars have made further researches in this field, and have brought to light much additional material, with the result that in 1923 the latest book on this subject was published, "The Babylonian Epic of Creation," by S. Langdon of Oxford, in which all the findings were collated, and the transliteration of the original texts and their translation were printed upon par-

allel pages. Some of the tablets have been broken or defaced, so that there are a good number of gaps in the reading, but this does not seriously interfere with an intelligible presentation of a connected story.

There are seven divisions of this epic, which are now known as the seven tablets of creation. "The shortest tablet contains one hundred and thirty-eight lines, and the longest one hundred and forty-six, the average length of a tablet being about one hundred and forty-two lines." A summary of the contents of these tablets can be presented in a brief quotation:

The poem embodies the beliefs of the Babylonians and Assyrians concerning the origin of the universe; it describes the coming forth of the gods from chaos, and tells the story of how the forces of disorder, represented by the primeval water-gods Apsu and Tiamat, were overthrown by Ea and Marduk respectively, and how Marduk, after completing the triumph of the gods over chaos, proceeded to create the world and man.¹

A few extracts from these tablets may be of interest. The translation in each case is by Langdon. That the writers started with the idea that there was a time when there was neither heaven nor earth, nor the lower order of the gods, is evident from the first lines of the first tablet:

When on high the heavens were not named,
And beneath a home bore no name,
And Apsu primeval, their engenderer,
And the 'Form,' Tiamat, the bearer of them all,
There mingled their waters together;
Dark chambers were not constructed, and marsh lands were not seen;
When none of the gods had been brought into being,
And they were not named, and fates were not fixed,
Then were created the gods in the midst thereof.

It is not necessary to follow this mythical and devious story through the various tablets, and a brief outline of their contents will be sufficient:

The first is an introduction embodying the atheistic philosophy of a late age, when the divine personages of mythology had been resolved into the material forces and elements of nature, and creation was regarded as a process of self-evolution. The second and third

¹ *The Seven Tablets of Creation*, p. xxv. By L. W. King. Luzac and Co., London.

books recount the war of the gods, and the fourth ends with the victory of Merodach and the creation of the heavenly firmament. The fifth tablet describes the appointment of the heavenly bodies for signs and seasons and days and years. They were not created like the firmament, since in the eyes of the Babylonians the sun and moon and stars were deities, and consequently had come into existence at the same time as Merodach himself. What the creator did, therefore, was to fix their places and duty, to 'ordain the year' with its twelve months, and to bind the whole together by inviolable laws, 'so that none might err or go astray.'

In the sixth book the creation of man is narrated. Man was made of bone which the god had fashioned, and of the blood of life which he had drawn from his own veins. . . .

The seventh and last book of the epic is a hymn of praise sung by the gods in honor of Merodach, in which the attributes and powers of the other 'great gods' are transferred to him.²

In view of the assumption of the modernists that the 'record of creation in the first chapter of Genesis is simply a sort of refinement of the Babylonian epic, it may be worth the space to quote the first lines of the sixth tablet which tell of the creation of man:

When Marduk (Merodach) heard the words of the gods,
He opened his mouth speaking unto Ea,
'Blood will I construct, bone will I cause to be.
Verily I will cause *Lilu* (man) to stand forth, verily his name is
man.

I will create *Lilu*, man,
Verily let the cult services of the gods be imposed, and let them be
pacified.

I will moreover skilfully contrive the ways of the gods.
All together let them be honored and may they be divided into two
parts.'

Ea replied to him, speaking to him a word;
For the pacification of the gods he imparted to him a plan:
'Let one of their brothers be given,
He shall perish and men be fashioned.
Let the great gods assemble,
Let this one be given and as for them may they be sure of it.'
Marduk assembled the great gods,
Kindly he ordered them giving instruction.
He opened his mouth charging the gods,
The king speaking a word to the Anunnaki.
'Verily the former thing which we foretold to you is become true,

² *Monument Facts and Higher Critical Fancies*, pp. 99-101. By A. H. Sayce. Fleming H. Revell Company.

Swearing true oaths by myself.
 Who was it that made war?
 That caused Tiamat to revolt and joined battle?
 Let him that made war be given.
 I will cause him to bear his transgression, but dwell ye in peace.'
 The Igigi the great gods replied,
 Unto Lugal-dimmer-anki, counselor of the gods their lord,
 'It was Kingu that made war;
 That caused Tiamat to revolt and joined battle.'
 They bound him and brought him before Ea,
 Punishment they imposed upon him, they severed (the arteries) of
 his blood,
 With his blood he (Ea) made mankind,
 In the cult service of the gods, and he set the gods free.³

Now the claim is seriously made that there is such a marked similarity between this Babylonian epic of creation and the account in the first chapter of Genesis that there must be some real connection between the two, and some go so far as to affirm that the Genesis account is derived from the Babylonian. Certainly there are some words common to both, such as heavens, waters, created, and man, but how can any seriously minded student of these two documents, who knows their origin, conclude that the writer of Genesis was indebted in any degree to the author of this ridiculous myth for his teaching concerning creation week! Compare the one God of Genesis with the many gods of the epic of creation. Compare the accounts of the creation of man in the two documents. The whole record in Genesis is simple and dignified, while the epic is involved and fantastic. The first chapter of Genesis emphasizes the distinguishing mark of the one true God,—He creates all things by the power of His word. The Babylonian story reveals a plurality of gods who quarrel with each other, and to one of whom is attributed the creation of man out of the blood of another. The one story rests upon the authority of inspiration, the other is the product of men who "became vain in their reasonings, and their senseless heart was darkened." It ought not to be difficult for us to make our choice between them.

A candid and strong statement concerning the question involved has been made by a recent defender of the record in Genesis:

³ *The Seven Tablets of Creation.* By L. W. King. Luzac and Co., London.

All or almost all of those scholars ('learned Orientalists' and 'modern commentators') grant that in the beginning there was only one tradition or legend of creation; but according to them that was not the Biblical narrative, but the Babylonian. This, they say, the Hebrew priests of the exile learned in Babylon; accepted it as a plausible explanation of the great fact of the existence of the universe, purged it from all polytheistic and mythical excrescences, and reduced it to the Genesis we now read. They therefore affirm that in the beginning there existed the Babylonian legend, from which the Biblical narrative was derived, together with all similar narratives found in other cosmologies. On the contrary, I maintain that originally men possessed the history of creation such as we now read in Genesis; that much later, owing to corruption of the Biblical narrative, there arose the Babylonian, Vedic, Avestic, Etruscan and Greek myths. First history, then legend; first the perfect, then the imperfect; first truth, afterward error; first monotheism, then in progress of time polytheism.⁴

In the very nature of the case we should not expect archeology to reveal the method of creation or the origin of life. It is impossible for it to do so. It does not testify to origins but to history. One of the historical facts to which it bears testimony is that there was preserved among different ancient peoples a mythical account of creation which is nothing short of a ridiculous travesty of the Biblical record and probably a perversion of it adapted to suit a mind darkened by heathen teaching and practices.

The pity of it is that in this enlightened age leading thinkers both in the field of science and in the field of religion should seriously advocate that this degraded and degrading conception of the method of creation is the primary one and the real origin of the account in Genesis, or even that the Babylonian epic had a marked influence upon the first chapter of Genesis. Such teaching ought to be promptly and emphatically repudiated by everyone who has an intelligent respect for, not to say a Christian belief in, the Bible. It dishonors God and takes away the very foundation of saving faith in the gospel of re-creation.

A certain class of writers, sometimes designated as Pan-Babylonists, have strongly stressed the claim that the religion and culture of Israel were largely derived from Babylonia. They affirm that in the early belief of Israel Jehovah was a tribal

⁴ *The Biblical Story of Creation*, pp. 25, 26. By Giorgio Bartoli. Harper and Brothers.

deity, like the gods of the heathen nations; that the story of creation as found in Genesis is a mere variation of the Babylonian epic of creation; that the origin of the seventh-day sabbath is purely Babylonian; and that the whole idea of sacrifices, the prominent feature of the Israelitish system, is simply an adaptation of Babylonish customs. According to this scheme of interpretation, the five books of Moses, instead of possessing inspired authority, are simply a revised version of astral myths and Babylonian traditions.

The foundation upon which the Pan-Babylonists rest their pagan teaching is the claim that the Semitic Babylonians "came from Arabia, and that after their culture had developed in Babylonia it was carried westward into Amurru (*i. e.*, Palestine and Syria) generally known as the land of the Amorites." In marked contrast with this claim, which is in reality destructive of the fundamental verities of Christianity, is the conclusion reached by a well-known archeologist, which I will present in his own words:

Without attempting to determine the ultimate origin of the Semites, the writer holds that every indication, resulting from his investigations, proves that the movement of the Semites was eastward from Amurru and Aram (*i. e.*, from the lands of the West) into Babylonia. In other words, the culture of the Semitic Babylonians points, if not to its origin, at least to a long development in Amurru before it was carried into Babylonia.⁵

The author occupies the whole of his book in furnishing the proof of his contention, availing himself of the results of the excavations made in Palestine up to the time of his writing, and then summarizes his conclusions in brief statements:

This much can be emphasized, without taking into consideration the clay tablets found in that district which will be discussed later: the excavations conducted in Palestine do not show any Babylonian influence in the early period of Israelitish history, nor in the pre-Israelitish. In the late Assyrian period, when the armies of that nation again and again overran the land, when Assyrian officials in many cases were set over cities and put into control of affairs, it is perfectly natural that traces of the Assyrians should be discovered; especially when we know that towns were repeopled with Assyrians after the natives were carried into exile.⁶

⁵ *Amurru, the Home of the Northern Semites*, p. 13. By Albert T. Clay. The Sunday School Times Company (1909).

⁶ *Id.*, p. 26.

After surveying the results of the excavations conducted in Palestine, we must, therefore, agree with Nowack, who in his review of the work of Schumacher and Steuernagel at Tel el-Mutesesim (1908), takes issue with those who claim predominant influence of Babylonian culture in Palestine from the third millennium on. He says: 'It is a disturbing but irrefutable fact that until down to the fifth stratum—i. e., to the beginning of the eighth century—important Assyrian influences do not assert themselves.' 'It is most significant that in Megiddo not a single idol (Gottesbild) from the Assyrian-Babylonian Pantheon has been found.' 'Some proofs of Assyrian-Babylonian influence are first met in the fifth and sixth stratum; while this is limited, so far as I can see, to the seals found there.'⁷

In short, all this attests the credibility of the claims made on the basis of the Palestinian excavations and other researches, that an ancient Semitic people, with a not inconsiderable civilization, lived in Amurru prior to the time of Abraham.⁸

But beyond such influences as are due to commercial relations, and perhaps the script, it does not appear that the culture of Amurru, according to all that we know from the excavations and the monuments, was modified by Babylonian forces. In short, a careful consideration of the data at our disposal confirms the contention that many extravagant statements have been made concerning the indebtedness of Israel and the Western Semites to Babylonia.⁹

Professor Clay is not the only archeologist who has abandoned the view that the Semitic Babylonians were originally from Arabia. The German scholar, Prof. Ernest Sellin, bears this testimony:

The recently discovered tablets of Bogharkoi, which, in several places, mention the Chabiri (the Hebrews of the Old Testament) as a section of the inhabitants of the empire of the Chatti (the Hittites), lead us to think, more and more, that we will have totally to abandon the conception, which Wellhausen takes for granted, and which long before prevailed, according to which the home of all Semites is to be sought in Arabia; but that, on the contrary, the Semites came from Asia Minor.¹⁰

In his introduction, which accompanies Professor Sellin's contribution to the discussion of this fundamentally important subject, Bishop H. M. DuBose makes this statement:

Archeology has dissipated the illusion of a north Arabian Bedouin

⁷ *Id.*, pp. 26, 27.

⁸ *Id.*, p. 31.

⁹ *Id.*, p. 42.

¹⁰ *Archeology versus Wellhausenism*, p. 246. By Ernest Sellin. Cokesbury Press (1924).

ancestry of the Israelitish tribes, and has placed that ancestry on a parity with the cultured and settled Hittites of the north. The supposed cultureless and semibarbarous age of Moses, upon which Wellhausen seems so much to have relied for the support of his theory of non-Mosaic writing and achievement, has been pushed back a thousand years, and the lawgiver is seen to have appeared at the noontide of an age of ancient learning and religious inquiry.¹¹

The importance of these apparently well-established conclusions should not be overlooked or underestimated. It follows at once that the accounts of creation and the deluge, found in the book of Genesis, are not mere variations of the Babylonian epic of creation and of the Babylonian tradition of a flood, but rather that they are the original documents, of which the Babylonian documents are the pagan perversions. The inherent improbability that the purer records should be developed from the baser and polytheistic traditions of heathen nations would seem to be a sufficient answer to the theories of the Pan-Babylonians, but in addition to this the testimony of archeology has seemed definitely to settle the question in favor of the Christian interpretation of the Mosaic documents.

There is a significant reason, possibly not clearly perceived by the majority of the students of this question, why such earnest and persistent efforts have been made to set aside the authority of the first chapter of Genesis. This is a part of the general movement to dismiss the supernatural from the whole field of human thought, and to account for all phenomena, both natural and spiritual, on the basis of resident forces and inflexible law. As the result, we now have a naturalistic science and a naturalistic religion, from which the God and Christ of the Scriptures have been shut out. In the religious area this latest system of doctrine is called the New Theology, or Modernism, and it is upheld by a large majority of the leaders of the various denominations. (7 .

Now let us consider what relation there is between the modern interpretation of the first chapter of Genesis and the modern interpretation of the gospel of Christ. The first revelation of the Christian's God, found in the Christian's Bible, is that He created all things by the power of His word. Later it is revealed that it was on account of His will that "they were, and were

¹¹ *Id.*, p. 234.

created." This has been dealt with in chapter four. Sin has marred the creation which was at first pronounced "very good," but in the gospel, provision has been made for "the restoration of all things." This is "the mystery" of the same creative will,—the mystery which existed in the mind and purpose of God "before times eternal," but was manifested in the person and work of Christ. As there was an original creation, so there is a new creation. And so we read: "If any man is in Christ, he is a new creature," or "there is a new creation." And again: "For neither is circumcision anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature," or "a new creation." Still again: "We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works." The God of the old creation is the God of the new creation. The creative will of the old creation is the creative will of the new creation. The power manifested in the original creation is the power manifested in the new creation.

It is plain, therefore, that if men can be made to believe that the record of the original creation is a mere myth resting upon a still older Babylonian myth, and that it is not an authoritative revelation, then it logically follows that the idea of a new creation is equally mythical. Consequently, as the old creation was the result of the working of resident forces, operating through long periods of time for a progressive development of a better order of things, so in the new creation dependence must be placed upon the same resident forces, with the hope, more or less forlorn, that they will gradually lift us up to a higher and better order of existence. Thus the god of evolution has been substituted for the God of creation, and as the result of the rejection of the God of creative power and the reliance upon the forces resident in human nature there have come a lowering of the moral standards and the failure to attain even to these new standards.

The fact of creation by the power of an infinite God is the alpha and omega, the first and the last, the beginning and end of the revelation found in the Bible. It is the theme of the first chapters of Genesis, where the story of the original creation is found, and it is likewise the theme of the last chapters of Revelation, where the story of the new creation is found. The creative idea permeates the whole book, and constitutes the very essence of the gospel of "the restoration of all things," through

the creative power of God manifested through Christ. Therefore, "turning away from the profane babblings and oppositions of the knowledge falsely so called," let us give serious attention to the inspired exhortation: "Take heed lest there shall be any one that maketh spoil of you through his philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ." Col. 2: 8.

I do not need to quote from current publications to prove that we are living in a lawless age steadily growing more lawless; that, speaking generally, the church has lost its power to convict the men and women of the world concerning sin and its consequences, or even that there is such a thing as sin, and to command the conduct of its own members; and that we are now facing such a world-wide situation as defies the wisdom of the greatest statesmen to deal successfully with it. And what next? The God of creation knows, and He has revealed that the absolute end of the old order, the destruction of the old creation and all who do not accept deliverance out of it, and the full manifestation of the new creation, are just at hand. This is the climax of the divine philosophy of history.

THE FLOOD OF NOAH *vs.* THE FLOOD OF SPECULATION

The geological theory of the flood of Noah as the last great change in land levels is being most exactly confirmed not only by investigations in glacial history, but by examination of the records of that cataclysm that befell the antediluvian world which are still to be seen written upon the mountains and valleys of Europe and of central and western Asia.—The Deciding Voice of the Monuments in Biblical Criticism, MELVIN GROVE KYLE.

NOAH and the ark! What about them? Do they suggest actual history, or myth and tradition? If we should accept the unsupported assertions of the radical scientist and his helpmeet, the modernist theologian, we could settle the matter in just four simple words, There was no flood. This chapter would then be as short as the one on snakes in the History of Ireland, which is said to have consisted of the brief and authoritative sentence, There are no snakes in Ireland.

One thing is certain: even if there was no flood of water, there has most certainly been a flood of speculations and theories dealing with this question poured out upon a long-suffering reading public. From the days of Philo the Jew, who lived in the time when Christ was upon the earth, until the last word of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, both serious and superficial thinkers of the passing centuries have discussed this subject pro and con, and some of their dogmatic assertions make rather interesting reading.

Of course the same fundamental question is involved in this issue as in creation, Is there a personal God capable of doing miraculous things, or is the present observed order of nature the absolute test for all the past? The Christian believer, the eyes of whose heart have been enlightened by the indwelling of Him who is the light of the world, has no difficulty in accepting the record of the flood in Genesis as the literal account of an event which actually occurred. Moses is not the only one who testifies to this fact. The apostle Peter in his second letter refers to a

class of persons living "in the last days" designated as mockers, who, holding firmly to the modern theory of continuity, ask, "Where is the promise of His coming? for, from the day that the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation." The apostle brings to nought their assumption of the principle of continuity by citing the destructive break in the fixed order of things due to the flood, and definitely charges upon them the responsibility for overlooking this decisive event: "For this they wilfully forget, that there were heavens from of old, and an earth compacted out of water and amidst water, by the word of God: by which means the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished."

That they "wilfully forget" this great catastrophe is indeed suggestive. Why "wilfully forget"? It is an unusual expression. They actually exercised their will to dismiss from their minds the testimony which confirmed the event. What testimony? The testimony of the rocks, of the fossils, and of the bodies of animals suddenly buried. "Oh, indeed," someone will be sure to say. "Why I thought the rocks and the fossils are assumed to prove the steady progressive development in nature, and to forbid any great catastrophe." Yes, that is right, they "are assumed" to prove just that, but do they actually do it? I will deal with that question a little later.

But before we pass on let us note with some care just how the flood was interpreted in this passage of Scripture. It disproves the law of continuity. All things have not continued as they were from the first. A world-wide calamity occurred of such a destructive nature that the old world "perished." A terrific overflow of water was the outstanding feature of this destructive event. It would certainly be most remarkable if the world as we see it does not give some decisive evidence of this very unusual occurrence. And it does, as we shall see.

But we must not overlook the convincing fact that no less a person than Jesus of Nazareth positively declared that there was a flood. Read His clear statement: "And as were the days of Noah, so shall be the coming of the Son of man. For as in those days which were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and they knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall be the coming of the Son of man."

Noah was just as real a man as was the Son of man who spoke of Noah. The ark was a real boat into which the real Noah entered. It is an actual fact that "the flood came and took them all away." A historical Noah, a historical ark, and a historical flood.

There is not a living person who can now testify that there was a flood in the time of Noah, and that he saw it. There can be no such testimony that there has ever been another such catastrophe. Neither is there anyone who can declare, "I was alive in the days of Noah, and I affirm that there was no flood then." We do have the record written by Moses, the positive statements written by the apostle Peter, and the plain testimony of our Lord ("who cannot lie") that there was a flood in the time of Noah. The documents containing this threefold testimony have been preserved during the centuries, and until their trustworthiness is undeniably impeached, the fact of the flood is established according to the law of evidence with the same certainty as the victory of Constantine at the Milvian bridge or the sacking of Rome by Alaric, and that without involving the question of the inspiration of the Scriptures.

Of course the radical modernist and the skeptical scientists will pooh-pooh at this claim, but on what ground? Oh, they will assert with an air of superiority that Jesus simply adopted a tradition of His time as a vehicle for conveying an important lesson. Indeed! How enlightening! But what does this kind of reasoning show? Simply this: since the coming of the Son of man is by Jesus declared to be just as sure as the flood in the days of Noah, and since there was no flood, it follows that Jesus, while attempting to prove His second coming, really proved that it was just as mythical as the flood. A lie may serve all right as a vehicle in which to convey another lie, but not as a vehicle for truth. Jesus was not that kind of a modernist.

After the same method of attempting by mere highbrow assertion to discredit written documents accredited for many centuries by the best scholarship, these representatives of "the knowledge which is falsely so called" say that if Peter had lived in our time and had known as much as we know, he would never have made such unfounded statements about an alleged flood. That he wrote as he did is simply the proof of his ignorance of the facts of modern science. We should be sorry for him, but

not think of believing him. He may have meant well, but with the true Pharisaical spirit we may say, "Dost thou teach us?" Incidentally I might call attention to the evident fact that this is just the kind of reasoning which results in putting the philosophy of the materialist in the place of the revealed gospel, and leaves us "without God in the world."

As for Moses, why trouble ourselves about anything that he wrote? Did he not live in a primitive age when they all accepted the myths then current? It certainly is unreasonable to ask us in this twentieth century of the triumph of modern science to go back anywhere from 4,000 to 1,250,000 years for an authority on physical phenomena. One who wishes to be regarded as in the front rank of scientific advance will perhaps permit his questionings to be stifled by such lofty assumptions of superiority, but some of us will still maintain our faith in God and His word. In the near future Moses and the prophets will be vindicated, and our simple faith will be vindicated at the same time.

But is there any positive testimony to confirm the statements of the Scriptures concerning the flood? There certainly is, and we must now give attention to it. It is significant that among nearly all the nations and races, ancient and modern, there is found a tradition of some kind of a deluge. In some nations, notably the Babylonians, this tradition is in some particulars quite similar to the Biblical account, while in others it is almost entirely different and sometimes quite fantastic. Yet in every case there is the underlying idea of a destructive overflow of water. Francois Lenormant, sometime Professor of Archeology in the National Library of France, enters into this question quite fully, and comes to the following conclusion:

The lengthy review of the subject in which we have just been engaged leaves us in a position to affirm that the account of the deluge is a universal tradition in all the branches of the human family, with the sole exception of the black race. And a tradition everywhere so exact and so concordant cannot possibly be referred to an imaginary myth. No religious or cosmogonic myth possesses this character of universality. It must necessarily be the reminiscence of an actual and terrible event, which made so powerful an impression upon the imaginations of the first parents of our species that their descendants could never forget it.¹

¹ *Beginnings of History*, pp. 486, 487. By Francois Lenormant. Trans. 2nd French Edition. Chas. Scribner's Sons.

In considering the character and critical value of this almost universal tradition Lenormant makes some observations worthy of consideration:

In the first place, however, we shall be obliged to sweep away certain legendary records which have been erroneously associated with the Biblical deluge, but whose essential features are incapable of such assimilation by the laws of true criticism. These stories refer to local phenomena, and their historic date belongs to a time comparatively near our own. . . . To be guilty of classifying tales of this nature with those that refer to the deluge would tend to weaken the value of the consequences which we are justified in deducing from the agreement of these last, instead of strengthening them.²

In this connection it seems fitting to make at least brief reference to the result of excavations recently made in that portion of Babylonia from which Abraham was called out. A quotation from a recent book by J. Garrow Duncan, Director of Excavations in Babylonia, Egypt and Palestine, will set this forth:

A year ago who would have believed that the story of the flood in Genesis might prove to contain actual history? I confess that this is one of the passages of which I had never dared to hope for any elucidation, much less confirmation, from the results of excavation. Yet the recent discoveries in Babylonia, in the neighborhood of Ur and Kish, leave no doubt whatever that, at the very period into which the story of Noah and his ark must be fitted, the whole country was buried under an inundation which appears to have remained in possession many years, bringing civilization to a dead stop, causing cessation of all life and activity in that region, as well as migration of those inhabitants who were able to escape to land at a higher level. The story of Noah, therefore, assumes a new aspect.³

At first thought such an admission as this seems to be quite heartening, but the comments by the same writer immediately following will certainly chill any such warmth of feeling:

That his ark should have steered northwards in the direction of higher lands is exactly what we should expect. That it came to rest on a hilltop becomes probable. In fact, even if we dispense with the man Noah himself and with the details of the story of the filling of the ark and its wanderings, we cannot deny the fact that, at the very

² *Id.*, p. 383.

³ *The Accuracy of the Old Testament*, p. vi. By J. Garrow Duncan. The Macmillan Company.

period referred to, there was a great inundation such as is described; that it affected a very large region, that life came to a standstill in that region, and that very likely those who escaped were those who took such measures of precaution as are described in Gen. 6. The historical setting of the narrative in Genesis thus appears to be correct. There seems, in fact, to be an actual historical background to the story—not the occasional or yearly floods caused by overflow of the rivers, but a great flood that held the region in its throes for very many years.⁴

While fully recognizing what it means to a skeptically inclined excavator to state the conclusions here affirmed by Mr. Duncan, yet I must frankly say that he is far away from confirming the Biblical story of the flood. On the contrary he seems to regard it as of no positive authority. Some of the expressions which he uses have a familiar sound and suggest the uncertainty of the evolutionist. One who really believes the Bible does not introduce his conclusions with "becomes probable," "very likely," and "appears to be correct." Mr. Duncan's flood is local, while the Genesis flood is universal. Some escape from Mr. Duncan's flood by fleeing to higher ground, while none escaped from the Genesis flood except those who were in the ark. Mr. Duncan's flood, so far as he describes it, may have been due to wholly natural causes, while the Genesis flood is referred to the miraculous work of a personal God. Mr. Duncan's flood continues "very many years," while the Genesis flood continued about one year only. Such decided differences would not be found in two correct records of the same event. Mr. Duncan's flood is not the same as the Genesis flood, if his interpretation of it is reliable. The testimony to a universal, destructive deluge borne by the present condition of the earth, and by the remains of animal life found as the result of excavations, is decidedly positive. Let us consider it.

I am not a geologist or the son of a geologist, and I therefore cannot present the results of my own observations for consideration, but I will submit a few of the conclusions to which some observers have come. The first is from an author who is recognized as an effective advocate of a conservative geology:

In our modern world, too, a considerable amount of geological work of one kind and another is being done. But all these series of geo-

⁴ *Id.*, pp. vi, vii.

logical operations, though prolonged over thousands of years as they have been, sink into insignificance when compared with those vast changes which took place during and immediately subsequent to the world catastrophe which the Scripture calls the flood. . . .

It is equally evident that the convulsions which the crust of the earth went through during this prolonged disturbance, would account for much of the contortion and twisting that the older rocks plainly exhibit. . . .

It would be almost inevitable that enormous thicknesses of strata would be piled up over very unequally stable foundations. And where the basement rocks were not competent to support a mile or so in thickness of extra load, these strata would necessarily settle down, while other large areas might remain nearly horizontal. Accordingly, where certain portions, perhaps a square mile or more in area, settled down because of a yielding foundation, the upper strata near the edges of this area would become tilted; and if the settling was extensive and the overlying strata was a mile or so in thickness, this tilting of the strata might result in a very marked contortion of the disturbed portions, or even in a distinct rupturing of the surface rocks. . . .

When we understand that these things were taking place in many parts of the earth at the same time, there is little doubt that we have here an explanation of a great many things which we observe in almost every mountain region; for the rocks everywhere present the clearest evidence that most of the folding and tilting of the rocks occurred while the beds composing them were *still soft*.⁵

Now how about the fossils? I can only deal with fossil fishes. It is a fact well known to students in the field of science that "fossil fishes are found in almost all the geological formations." Were they deposited there by a slow process extending over many millenniums, or by the sudden action of mighty forces? This is a crucial question which a geologist will now answer:

It can be definitely said that, through all the geologic formations in which fish remains occur, a large proportion of the remains consists of entire fishes or of sections in which every scale is still in position; every fin is extended as in life attitude. All of this conclusively proves that when myriads of such fishes were simultaneously killed, their bodies were deposited or stranded within a few hours or a few days at most after death, so that the flesh, the liver, the alimentary canal and other soft parts were unquestionably enclosed and intact, when sediment sealed them up.⁶

⁵ *The New Geology*, pp. 689-691. By George McCready Price. The Pacific Press.

⁶ *Fishes, the Source of Petroleum*, p. 400. By J. M. MacFarlane. The Macmillan Company.

The death of myriads of fish at the same time, and their sudden burial and their perfect preservation, are not the result of the forces of nature acting in a normal way, but clearly prove the sudden action of terrific forces acting in an unusual way. Such were the forces which produced the flood.

Other significant facts bearing upon this question are discussed in the following quotation:

But equally if not more convincing as evidence that a speedy destruction must have overtaken our earth is the condition in which the Siberian mammoths are found. In that natural, year-round refrigerator, where the ground is frozen to a depth of a hundred feet or more, these prehistoric beasts are dug up intact, with their flesh so well preserved as to furnish meat for the explorers. Instances have even been known where mammoths had undigested food still in their stomachs and unchewed grass in their mouths. The imagination is appalled in its endeavor to picture the cataclysm necessary to explain such facts as these.

Many other illustrations might be cited as proof that the various animals entombed in the strata must have met with sudden death and immediate burial. The uniform testimony of virtually all the fossils is that they were sealed up in their respective strata before their fine distinctive lines had been obliterated by decomposition.

The next fact that should be considered is the frequency with which deep-sea species are buried indiscriminately with shore species or even with land plants. We now know—what the early geologists did not know—that the deeper levels of the ocean are so absolutely calm as not to disturb even the softest oozes on the ocean floor. Only an inconceivably violent upheaval of the great deep, therefore, could explain this frequent strange mixture of the deep-sea, shore, and land fossils in the strata.⁷

In discussing such a subject as an universal deluge one must in the very nature of the case get into deep water, but I hope we shall not be overwhelmed by a flood of ideas with which we have not been familiar. The facts recited in these quotations, and the logical conclusion plainly to be drawn from them, can surely be understood by every thoughtful reader. The present order of things supplies the clear proof that at some time in the remote past there must have occurred a sudden and terrific interference with the then existing order, with such destructive results as are set forth in the familiar words, "the world that

⁷ *Creation—Not Evolution*, p. 62. By Alonzo L. Baker and Francis D. Nichol. The Pacific Press.

then was, being overflowed with water, perished." Just such a flood as is described in the Scriptures is an established fact.

Some brief extracts from the utterances of well-known writers who accepted in general the Biblical story of the flood may be of interest. Tertullian (155–222 A. D.) testified:

There was a time when her [the earth's] whole orb, withal, underwent mutation, overrun by many waters. To this day marine conchs and triton's horns sojourn as foreigners on the mountains, eager to prove to Plato that even the heights have been inundated.

Chrysostom (345–407 A. D.) defines the deluge as "the common wreck of the inhabited land." Augustine (354–430 A. D.) referred to "bones of incredible size" which were found in the rocks of northern Africa as evidence of the flood. Luther (1483–1546 A. D.) discussed this subject at some length in his commentary on Genesis. He regarded the flood as destructive of all things. He says:

My opinion of the matter which, indeed, I have already given, is that paradise, which was very soon closed against man on account of sin, and afterward totally destroyed and swept from the earth by the flood, left no trace or vestige of its original state remaining, which can now be discovered. . . . The awful deluge destroyed all things.

Thomas Burnet, an English writer who lived in the latter part of the eighteenth century, defended the Biblical teaching of an universal flood as against the claim of a limited flood, which was first advocated in his time. He significantly inquired:

What need so much ado to build an ark to save Noah and his family if he might have saved himself and them only by retiring into some neighboring country? Had this not been a far easier thing and more compendious than the great preparations he made of a large vessel, with rooms for the reception and accommodation of beasts and birds?

The discussion of this subject continued from time to time during the next century with the majority of writers maintaining the conservative view, but during the nineteenth century, a century distinguished for its skepticism and rank infidelity, there came a noticeable change, and the Biblical account of the flood was more generally discredited. With the acceptance of the uniformitarian theory, the law of continuity, which ascribes all changes to the uniform working of natural laws, came of

course the rejection by all evolutionists of any such catastrophe as the deluge, and this radical view is the generally prevailing one at the present time.

But does it make any essential difference which view we may adopt? Does it have any real effect upon our personal experience whether or not such a disaster occurred four or five thousand years ago? Such questions should be squarely faced and answered. Let us give some serious thought to them.

If the record in Genesis is a myth, an adaptation of the Babylonian tradition, then Moses and Jesus and Peter did not speak "from God, being moved by the Holy Spirit," but simply repeated a fanciful story. Furthermore, if there was no destruction of the world that then was by a terrible catastrophe, then there will be no destruction of the world that now is by another terrible catastrophe "at the revelation of the Lord Jesus from heaven with the angels of His power in flaming fire," since both catastrophes rest upon the same authority. Consequently our hope of a literal, personal second advent, when the present order of things will suddenly be changed and a kingdom of righteousness will be ushered in, has no certain basis, and this whole second advent movement is a mistake. In other words, to accept the claims of the radical scientist of today is to eliminate from the Bible all the supernatural working of a supernatural God, and to place ourselves under the merciless rule of inflexible law, condemned to a hopeless struggle. No indeed, we cannot consent to such an absolute loss of the gospel. "For what shall a man be profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and forfeit his life?" No law, either natural or spiritual, can take the place of "the power of God unto salvation."

Although every rainbow is a visible token of the definite promise of God that there will never be another flood, yet we are now told by an official weather prophet that in the distant future the earth will be submerged by an overflow of water due to the melting of the ice around the north pole. Dr. William J. Humphreys of the United States Weather Bureau committed himself to this view in an address before the American Meteorological Society, when he declared:

Salt water will sweep over the continents, leaving only the higher land dry. Holland will be inundated. Fish will swim in Bucking-

ham Palace, and Westminster Abbey, for most of England will lie beneath the waves. The Desert of Sahara will be a great inland sea. What is now New York will be marked by the upper stories and towers of the taller skyscrapers as they jut out of the water.

In an inundation which would thus change geography and which would be accompanied by a rise in temperature, the climate would return to what it was when dinosaurs roamed the earth and dense jungles of dank, gigantic ferns grew in what is now Pennsylvania and Canada. Palms and alligators would flourish at the poles.

Generally speaking the interpreters of physical science have affirmed that such a flood as is described in the Scriptures has never occurred, and have thus impugned the accuracy of the word of God. But what do we find now? A man of some standing in the scientific world predicts another flood, and that in the face of the plain declaration of the Scriptures that such a thing will never be. It seems to be almost an axiom of modern science that the wisdom of men is wiser than the foolishness of God, and that we must consequently accept without question the deductions of the scientist, even though they squarely contradict the plainest statements of the Bible. This may be acceptable to the modernist, but everyone who knows his God will testify, "The sum of thy word is truth."

Noah was "a preacher of righteousness" who faithfully warned the people of his time of the approaching calamity, but they did not believe his message. Why? Well, it heralded the coming of an event contrary to the observed order. Rain had never fallen from heaven. It was simply impossible that such an overwhelming quantity of water should pour down from above. By the unbelievers of his time Noah was regarded as a fanatical dreamer when he commenced to build such a large boat on dry land. What clearer proof could there be of a disordered mind? But "the flood came, and took them all away." Noah was "warned of God concerning things not seen as yet," things contrary to the observed order, and he believed and acted upon his belief "to the saving of his house."

Today, a world-wide warning is being sounded concerning another approaching calamity, and the people are being urged to prepare for it by exercising the same faith which Noah exercised. This message is regarded by the modern scientist and the modern theologian in the same way as the announcement of

the flood was treated in the time of Noah. It is contrary to the reigning philosophy which assumes that as things have been, so they will continue to be. But just as this rationalistic assumption was shattered by the flood, so it will be shattered again by the advent of the Son of man.

“Behold, He cometh with the clouds; and every eye shall see Him, and they that pierced Him; and all the tribes of the earth shall mourn over Him. Even so, Amen.”

“PREPARE TO MEET THY GOD.”

VI

THE TOWER OF BABEL AND THE FATHER OF MANY NATIONS

The four kings of Genesis 14 have arisen from the dead in archeological history. There is still some dispute about the identification of certain of them, but the confederation has appeared in Babylonian history of that time; and such a suzerainty over Palestine as is implied in the narrative of Genesis 14, is established beyond reasonable question.—The Deciding Voice of the Monuments in Biblical Criticism, MELVIN GROVE KYLE.

WERE you ever present in a meeting attended by those who spoke several different languages, and where it was therefore necessary for several interpreters to interpret at the same time? If so, you had a suggestion of what happened at Babylon four thousand or more years ago. What was the occasion? It was after the flood. The people, who used a common language, decided to build upon a plain "in the land of Shinar" a city and a tower, a lofty tower "whose top may reach unto heaven," and thus to make a name for themselves.

The significance of this action should not be overlooked. When Noah talked about a coming flood, the people laughed at his foolishness, and did not believe that such a thing was possible. After the flood the people who heard about it did not laugh about it, and they did not believe the promise of God that there would not be another. A downpour of rain from the skies was a new experience, and possibly by climbing to the top of the proposed high column, they might be able to find the reason for this untoward event; or, if another flood did really come, it might be that more people could find refuge and safety in the tower than were preserved in the ark. In any case they thought to make a name for themselves—an ambition which has not been confined to the people of Babylon.

But not so very long ago certain wise men of modern Babylon not only laughed at the idea of a real flood, but to them the tower of Babel served as a good subject for a joke. Even so

late as 1915, Burton Scott Easton, a representative of modern thought, dealt with the story in the eleventh chapter of Genesis in this way:

The 'historicity' of the narrative will be upheld by very few persons of the present day. Human languages began to diverge (if, indeed, there ever was such a thing as a primitive language) tens, if not hundreds, of thousands of years before the building of Babylon and long before human beings had attained enough skill to erect the most rudimentary structures, let alone such an elaborate affair as the brick-built city and tower of Babel.¹

Inasmuch as the Bible is not in harmony with the requirements of evolution, of course the Biblical record is not historical, we are supposed to believe, and must therefore be discarded. "Such are the arts by which history is transmuted into legend."

In marked contrast with such vain theorizing is the testimony of archeology. One who has spent a number of years superintending the excavation of ancient Babylon and its surroundings, and who is justly regarded as high authority upon this subject, discusses the question at some length. He first considers the reference to such a tower in the writings of Herodotus, the Greek historian, who "speaks of eight towers rising one above another," and then presents the results of his own study and investigation:

We do not know the complete height of the tower. Nabopolassar, however, lays great stress on it, and so does Nebuchadnezzar in his cylinder-inscription of Etemenanki. Nabopolassar says: 'At this time Marduk commanded me . . . ; the tower of Babylon, which in the time before me had become weak, and had been brought to ruin, to lay its foundation firm on the bosom of the underworld, while its top should stretch heavenwards.' Nebuchadnezzar says: 'To raise up the top of Etemenanki that it may rival heaven, I laid to my hand.' In both inscriptions mud brick, burnt brick, asphalt, mud, and mighty cedars of Lebanon are mentioned as the materials employed. The latter could scarcely have been employed otherwise than to roof in the temple on the top of the tower. . . . It is obvious that the roof of so lofty a temple would be welcomed by the Babylonian astronomers as a platform for their observations. . . .

But what is all this written information in comparison with the clearness of the evidence we gain from the buildings themselves, ruined though they are? The colossal mass of the tower, which the Jews of the Old Testament regarded as the essence of human presumption, amidst the proud palaces of the priests, the spacious treasures, the

¹ *International Standard Bible Encyclopædia*, p. 2995.

innumerable lodgings for strangers—white walls, bronze doors, mighty fortification walls set round with lofty portals and a forest of one thousand towers—the whole must have conveyed a sense of overwhelming greatness, power, and wealth, such as could rarely have been found elsewhere in the great Babylonian kingdom.²

Another writer, who has spent much time in the East superintending the work of excavating, bears similar testimony to the historical accuracy of the Biblical record concerning this tower:

The circumstantial accuracy of the Old Testament description is thus confirmed, and we are now in possession of the following facts:

1. The original writer was accustomed to stone as the usual building material in his own country.

2. He contrasts this with Babylonia where they used burned brick for stone.

3. In place of the mortar used in his own country, which was really mud-mortar, they used bitumen in Babylonia.

4. He tells of the building of a tower of refuge from future floods in verse 4—a tower which the people raised to a certain height and then suddenly left off building.

On all these points the narrative is correct, and confirmed by excavation.³

Other writers, such as E. A. Wallis Budge in *Babylonian Life and History*, pp. 64–66, and A. H. Sayce, also agree with those already quoted in bearing witness to the historical fact of a tower of Babel. A paragraph from Sayce may be of special interest:

After the flood, we are told in Genesis that men journeyed from the east until they came to the plain of Shinar, where they built the tower of Babel, in the vain hope of ascending into heaven. . . . Now Mr. George Smith discovered some broken fragments of a cuneiform text which evidently related to the building of the tower of Babel. It tells us how certain men had 'turned against the father of all the gods,' and how the thoughts of their leader's heart 'were evil.' At Babylon they essayed to build 'a mound' or hill-like tower, but the winds blew down their work, and Anu 'confounded great and small on the mound,' as well as their 'speech,' and 'made strange their counsel.' The very word that is used in the sense of 'confounding' in the narrative of Genesis is used also in the Assyrian text.⁴

² *The Excavations at Babylon*, pp. 195, 196. By Robert Koldewey. The Macmillan Company.

³ *The Accuracy of the Old Testament*, p. 31. By J. Garrow Duncan. The Macmillan Company.

⁴ *Fresh Light from the Ancient Monuments*, pp. 35, 36. Fleming H. Revell Company.

Thus has the spade of the archeologist dug up the evidence which refutes the assertions of the skeptic, and positively confirms the writings of Moses.

Having now found that the story of the flood is confirmed by the facts of geology, and that the story of the building of the tower of Babel is confirmed by the facts of archeology, although both of these events have been denied by the higher critics, we may now proceed with good heart to consider the brief historical sketch found in the fourteenth chapter of Genesis. But is it really a historical sketch? "As a matter of fact, a distinguished Orientalist long ago declared this chapter to be a fantastic grouping together of names, which either belonged to some remote period, or were expressly invented for the occasion, and since that time it has become the fashion among the 'higher critics' of the Old Testament to echo this view." The narrative is familiar to all, and one principal factor in leading the critic to regard it as a mere tradition is the implied assertion that "at this early date an Elamite king not only exercised supremacy over the whole of Babylon but even penetrated as far as the Sinaitic peninsula in his lust for conquest." The fourteenth chapter of Genesis has been a battle ground upon which the critics have made a desperate stand. Only a brief review of the struggle and its results can be presented here. The first quotation is taken from a well-known authority:

The fourteenth chapter of Genesis has been under fire for a score or more of years. Its supposed antiquity has brought against it denials of its historicity. It has been maintained that it originated with the desire of magnifying the martial value of Abram, and of explaining the origin of Melchizedek; and that the story of these great military campaigns was nothing more or less than a piece of fiction. These denials have been based upon the theory that the events here described are located in prehistoric times. But light from the East has utterly dissipated this mist. We are now apprised of the fact that the armies of Babylon were doing no new thing when they set out to make a second conquest of the kings of the West. They were simply following the precedent and political policy of their distinguished predecessors.⁵

The whole story is summarized in this brief paragraph. The scholarly critics assumed to know more about this matter than

⁵ *The Monuments and the Old Testament*, p. 101. By Ira Maurice Price. American Baptist Publication Society.

Moses did, and of course their educated guess was to be regarded as the end of all controversy. But the ancient tablets have risen up to expose the foolishness of the wisdom of these self-constituted authorities on Biblical criticism, and to give new point to the old proverb, "He laughs best who laughs last." Let us now give attention to the testimony of the tablets:

The records known as the Spartoli tablets, belonging to the period 2000-1800, tell how Babylonia was laid waste by a group of kings, among whom were Tudkhala, or Tudhula, Eri-Eaku, and Kudur-Lahamal. (Tudkhala is Tidal, and Kudur-Lahamal is Chedorlaomer, and Eri-Eaku is Arioch, all of whom are mentioned in Gen. xiv: i). . . . This invasion of Babylonia by Chedorlaomer falls into the period of the First Dynasty of Babylon, 2179-1870. . . .

According to these tablets, therefore, the events recorded in Gen. xiv must date about or prior to 1850, or roughly between 2000 and 1800, which agrees exactly with the date we have assigned on other evidence to the arrival of Abraham in Palestine and the invasion of Palestine by the Hittites. . . . Amraphel, king of Shinar, is now identified as no other than Hammurabi, the well-known Babylonian king of the First Dynasty of Babylon, who ruled about the period above mentioned. . . .

Now, in the record of (H)Ammurabi's reign the event noted for his thirty-first year is the conquest of Rim-Sin, 'King of the Land Yamutbalum.' This Rim-Sin is elsewhere named Eri-Sin and Eri-Aku. Eri-Sin and Eri-Aku are both described as king of Larsa among other titles. Eri-Aku, king of Larsa, is Arioch, king of El-lasar. The El-prefix is probably the article.

All that we know of the city of Larsa, or El-lasar, of Gen. xiv: i, is that it was a center of sun worship, and its kings all bore Semitic names. This gives us the needed association of Hammurabi with Eri-Aku, or Arioch of Ellasar.

The fact that Amraphel had only recently conquered Arioch shows also that Arioch was in the same position as himself, a conquered vassal of Chedorlaomer's. Thus we see that Chedorlaomer was the ruling spirit, Arioch and Amraphel being his vassals or conquered allies, and Tidal was probably a hired leader of the mercenaries.⁶

Further evidence of the general correctness and reliability of Mr. Duncan's interpretation of these tablets is furnished by a conservative scholar of good standing:

The historical character of this narrative was widely discredited—as by Nöldeke. How could a late Israelitish writer possibly know of such events? How could such an expedition take place? The story

⁶ *The Accuracy of the Old Testament*, pp. 63-66. By J. Garrow Duncan. The Macmillan Company.

was declared to be a complete fiction. Strange as it is, however, it has now, as respects its historical framework, been singularly confirmed. It has been established by indubitable evidence that Babylonia was at this time under Elamitic suzerainty; we have even the name and date (c. 2250) of the king who overran it. It was found, further, that the known names of the kings of this Elamitic dynasty began with the word 'Kurdur,' meaning 'servant'—Kurdur-Nankhundi, Kurdur-Mabug. It was discovered that there was an Elamitic goddess named 'Lagamar,' so that Kurdur-Lagamar (Chedorlaomer) was a name of genuine Elamitic formation. It was found that these kings claimed sovereignty over 'Martu' (the west), or Palestine. It was ascertained that Kurdur-Mabug had a son—Eri-Aku (also called Rim-Sin), king of Larsa; there can be little doubt, the Arioch of Ellasar of this chapter. Amraphel was identified with Hammurabi. Finally it was announced that the name of Chedorlaomer himself had been found on a late inscription. The identification is questioned, and we need not press it; but it is significant that three leading specialists, Dr. Pinches (the discoverer), Professor Hommel, and Professor Sayce, still express themselves satisfied of the correctness of the reading. In any case, it seems abundantly made out that the author of this chapter is not romancing, but writes with a clear knowledge of the historical conditions of the times to which his narrative relates. For the rest, the Tel el-Amarna tablets testify to Uru-Salim as an ancient Canaanitish name for Jerusalem, and even Gunkel is disposed to accept Melchizedek as an historical person.⁷

It may be well just here to refresh our minds concerning the claims of the critics as to the documents dealing with the history of the first two or three thousand years. According to their traditional view Moses did not write the Pentateuch, and the leading characters mentioned in the books usually ascribed to him were purely mythical. Although the spade of the archeologist has dug up much unanswerable testimony, and at the same time has lacerated seriously the calm assurance of the critics, yet they have tried to evolve a smoke screen behind which they could seem to maintain their principal theory of a late date of the documents, produced by other writers after the exile, while conceding that in some features they might be historically correct. It is to laugh, if such serious issues were not involved.

Another writer, who has given careful study to the findings of the archeologist, reviews the facts already cited, and then comments upon the desperate straits to which the critics were driven by them:

⁷ *The Problem of the Old Testament*, pp. 411, 412. By James Orr. Chas. Scribner's Sons.

What did the modern critics do in the face of this evidence—since to admit the presence of such an ancient tradition in the Old Testament would be virtually equivalent to cutting the ground away from beneath their own feet? They could not, of course, deny that Kudur-Lagamar (Chedorlaomer in Gen. xiv) is a genuine Elamite name, or that the supremacy of the Elamites in Syria (including Palestine) is proved by one of Kudur-Mabug's inscriptions—though the reading Eri-Aku, as the name of a son of Kudur-Mabug, was at one time, though wrongly, disputed. They were therefore obliged—since there seemed no other way out of the difficulty—to fall back again on the theory of a post-exilic forgery, and to suggest that, like a nineteenth century novelist in search of 'local color,' the Jewish writer must have gone to the Babylonian priests for his antiquarian details. . . .

By adopting this attitude, it was no longer necessary for modern critics to deny that the events related in Gen. xiv rest on an actual basis of historic fact; they had now to admit, whether they liked it or not, that the names of the hostile kings especially were not pure inventions. But that the history of Abraham, whom they regard as not merely a legendary but rather a purely mythical being, should contain in its midst an ancient historical tradition, was something which they could not accept; for in that case the whole theory, according to which everything before the time of David is wrapped in the mist of legend, would begin to totter on its base, and the account drawn up by Moses would begin to appear in another and far more authentic light; in a word, the whole doctrine of the untrustworthiness of the earlier history of Israel—so dear to the hearts of modern critics of the Pentateuch—would suddenly find itself attacked in a vital part. In order, therefore, to save this master principle from ruin, there was nothing for it but to adopt the above opportunist expedient, the inherent absurdity of which must, one would think, be patent to every unprejudiced observer. This merely serves to show us once again how true it is that once the critic refuses to be convinced by the sheer force of facts because to do so would involve the sacrifice of a carefully elaborated theory, he is apt, like a drowning man, to catch at the various straws, provided they seem to promise him a way out of his difficulties.⁸

The conclusion which may legitimately be drawn from the documents bearing upon this matter has been well stated in these words:

In view of all these facts and opinions, the man who now dared to call the four kings 'petty sheiks of the desert' or their names 'etymological inventions' would be an object of ridicule. A place in history is found for these kings; and, though all is not yet known concerning them, they have ceased to be objects of reasonable sus-

⁸ *The Ancient Hebrew Tradition as Illustrated by the Monuments*, pp. 160-162. By Fritz Hommel. E. & J. B. Young.

picion. What exactly may be their historical character and importance is yet a legitimate subject for discussion, not so, any longer, the question of their legendary or mythical character. The importance of the fourteenth chapter in the narrative is plainly its importance in redemption history; the comparative unimportance of the epoch in world history will at once appear upon a careful study of the geography of the whole campaign of the four kings.⁹

During the last half century there has been a great increase in the knowledge of the history of the times of Abraham, and the effect of this increase upon the claims formerly made with such assurance by the critics is set forth in the following paragraph:

A history which had seemed lost for ever has been recovered for us, and we can now handle and read the very letters which passed between the contemporaries of Abraham. We now know almost as much, in fact, about the Babylonia of the age of Abraham as we do about the Assyria of the age of Isaiah or about the Greece of the age of Perikles. And the increase of knowledge has not been favorable to the results of 'criticism.' It has proved them to be nothing but the baseless fabric of subjective imagination. It is the book of Genesis, and not the works of the modern German critic, whose claim to credence has been vindicated by the discoveries of archeology. It is true that the discoveries have been disputed by the 'critic' inch by inch, that first the philological scholarship of the Assyriologist, and then his good faith, was questioned, and that now, when at length a grudging assent to undeniable facts has been extorted, we are told that the 'critical position' still remains unaffected. Unaffected! When the foundation upon which it rested is absolutely gone!¹⁰

It is said that there is a certain class of scholars who do not know, and do not know that they do not know. It seems to be an almost hopeless task to make such scholars admit they do not know, but the average student will certainly recognize the testimony of facts. It may be easy to assume that the earth rests upon the back of Atlas, but this theory is not very satisfactory so long as nothing can be found for Atlas to stand upon. Let the records speak.

The view of the critic, who bows at the shrine of evolution, is shattered by the testimony of archeology which confirms the record found in the Bible. We are safe in believing the inspired

⁹ *The Deciding Voice of the Monuments in Biblical Criticism*, p. 107. By Melvin Grove Kyle. Bibliotheca Sacra Company.

¹⁰ *Monument Facts and Higher Critical Fancies*, pp. 55, 56. By A. H. Sayce. Fleming H. Revell Company.

writings independent of any other documents, but in His kind providence God has encouraged such faith by so ordering events that years of patient research have produced an almost incredible number of ancient records which justify the fullest confidence in the historical accuracy of the Scriptures.

The confirmation of the historical character of the fourteenth chapter of Genesis is helpful in that it assures us that Melchizedek is a real person. This priest of a higher rank than that of Aaron is mentioned here in history, in the one hundred and tenth psalm in prophecy, and in the epistle to the Hebrews in fulfillment. The prophecy and its interpretation are thus definitely founded upon history, not myth. "The writer of the epistle [to the Hebrews], as we have seen, regards Melchizedek as a living type of a living and eternal king-priest. The old history, true to its literal reality, was, according to him, perfectly, ideally fulfilled in the facts of Christian history." An interesting side-light is thrown upon the historical character of the Melchizedek of Genesis xiv by the unearthing of tablets.

The tablets show that Palestine was at this time in possession of Egypt and the tablets are letters to the Pharaohs Amenophis III and IV. One is from Ebed-Tob the successor of Melchizedek. Three times he says 'not my father, not my mother installed me in this place but the Mighty King' (cp. Heb. 7: 1-4), *i. e.*, he did not inherit by succession, but by the gift and 'the arm of the Mighty King' (the deity).¹¹

The epistle to the Hebrews deals with the Melchizedek of Bible history, not the Melchizedek of secular history, and in the Bible history he appears without any mention of either birth or death, so that as far as the Scriptural record is concerned he had "neither beginning of days nor end of life." In this way it was possible for him to be a true type of Christ who was made priest "after the power of an endless life," even of Him who is "the same yesterday and today, yea and for ever." The fact that Melchizedek was a historical person takes this teaching out of the field of allegory and furnishes it with a sure foundation. Just as certainly as Melchizedek was a real priest, so certainly is Jesus a real priest, who "ever liveth to make intercession." "Let us therefore draw near with boldness unto the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy, and find grace to help us in time of need."

¹¹ Bullinger.

Our brief consideration of the historical character of the fourteenth chapter of Genesis naturally suggests that we should give some attention to the tragic end of Sodom and Gomorrah. The same Abraham with whom we meet in the fourteenth chapter of Genesis, and whom we find there leading an expedition for the rescue of Lot who had been carried captive from Sodom, we find in the eighteenth chapter pleading in behalf of the same city now threatened with destruction. The ten righteous persons whose presence would have saved this center of wickedness from its impending overthrow, could not be found, and so "Jehovah rained upon Sodom and Gomorrah brimstone and fire from Jehovah out of heaven." This fiery judgment upon sin in the extreme manifestation of its horrible depth has never been forgotten. "The tradition of this plain that has lingered to recent times was at that time a reality; here was a dead land round about a dead sea, and harboring the memory of a moral character that was dead and a stench in the nostrils of the whole world." The lesson taught by the fate of Sodom and Gomorrah has frequently been emphasized. "Twenty-eight times, by twelve Biblical writers, including a quotation from the Lord Himself, these cities are held up to execration as a lurid warning to other peoples and nations who would escape the wrath of God."

The efforts made in recent years to locate and to identify the ruins of Sodom have met with a good measure of success, and it is now definitely claimed that the site of this famous city has been found. The place where Sodom and Gomorrah stood is now very nearly covered by the Dead Sea, but an archeologist from Rome has been excavating its north shore, and has unearthed some remarkable proofs of the accuracy of the Biblical account of these flourishing centers of life and trade.

The diggers have found that the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah lived in a high state of culture in the bronze age about 4000 years ago. The date corresponds with the Bible chronology. They were able to paint murals and to write a language, made vases with great skill, used hand flour-mills, and traded with Egyptians. The archeologist affirms that according to present evidence, both cities were destroyed by fire at the same time and that the conflagration was very violent. The twin-cities were never rebuilt.

These later developments are apparently in harmony with a

personal study of the problem by Melvin Grove Kyle who visited the field a few years ago and made a report of his findings. Here are two significant paragraphs of his:

Most suggestive is the fact that the evidence of pottery sets the end of the settlement at Bad-ed-Dra' at about the time when Biblical sources place the catastrophe of the Cities of the Plain. This coincidence can hardly be accidental. We therefore seem to be justified in supposing that Bad-ed-Dra' was one of the sacred places, probably the Great High Place, of the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah, to which they made annual pilgrimages, and where they may have practised nameless rites, the nature of which had better not be surmised, in view of our other information about Canaanite religion. The distance from the settlement on the Plain was short; our shrine would be about twelve miles in a straight line from ancient Zoar, if our approximate localizations are correct, and hardly more than five miles from the nearest town on the Plain.

Here were the sure marks of the Canaanite civilization of that age, and sure proof that such civilization had ceased from that time on. Nowhere is there a trace of civilization of any kind again until we come to Byzantine times, except it be the cryptic reference of Ezekiel to the return of the captivity of Sodom, which probably means only that this utter desolation which had then lasted so long would at least be relieved, as it is likely soon to be. The silence of Scripture during these long centuries is no more significant than is the silence in this lore of pottery.¹²

While this does not positively locate the site of Sodom, yet it is in entire harmony with Biblical narrative, as it indicates a sudden cessation of activity at this place of heathen worship near that city just at the time when Sodom was destroyed. While waiting for further detailed reports for which the spade is now furnishing the facts, we may be thankful for what has already been found, and may feel certain that another chapter of archeological history will soon be written in letters of fire, possibly accompanied with the smell of sulphur, corroborating the inspired record of the utter destruction of impenitent Sodom. And what will the skeptics and the radical critics say? How much longer will they be able to sustain their weak attack upon the historical accuracy of the Old Testament? Again and again do the rocks and the ancient dust heaps cry out in its defence.

¹² *Explorations at Sodom*, pp. 78, 79. By Melvin Grove Kyle. Fleming H. Revell Company.

VII

THE HITTITES ASSERT THEMSELVES

Not a ruined city has been opened up that has given any comfort to unbelieving critics or evolutionists. Every find of archeologists in Bible lands has gone to confirm Scripture and confound its enemies. The stone has cried out of the wall to witness to the truth of Scripture and to the false character of the critical attacks. Not since Christ ascended back to heaven have there been so many scientific proofs that God's word is truth.

—J. W. NEWTON in *Christian Faith and Life*.

HAVE you forgotten anything? This question sometimes stares one in the face as he is leaving his room at the hotel. It is quite easy to forget a tooth-brush, or a soiled handkerchief, and no serious results would follow; but what about forgetting an empire? Who would have dreamed that a nation, now known to have continued for more than a thousand years, could have been lost out of history, and even its existence could have been seriously questioned by reputed scholars within the last half century? But again truth is stranger than fiction. In our school days we were made acquainted with "the great king, the king of Assyria," and the proud boast of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, "Is not this great Babylon, which I have built?" has become a proverb with us; but who then studied "The History of the Hittites"? They were a forgotten people.

Certainly the Hittites are mentioned in the Old Testament. When Jehovah made a covenant with Abraham by which He bound Himself to give to him the country then occupied by ten peoples, the Hittite was mentioned as among the ten (Gen. 15: 18-21). From that time until the restoration after the captivity in Babylon under the leadership of Ezra and Nehemiah the Hittites are mentioned over and over again, more than forty times in all. But when a new order of scholarship was duly installed in the colleges and universities of both the old and the new world, and it became quite fashionable to express doubts about the historical trustworthiness of the Scriptures, skepticism began to take the place of faith, and in due time the testimony of the Bible to facts of history was classed as uncertain or wholly

unreliable unless it was substantiated by the authority of modern writers. Inasmuch as there was no secular history of the Hittites in existence, it followed as a matter of course that the mention of them in the writings of Moses and elsewhere was simply another proof of the unreliable character of these documents which were declared to be made up of compilations of myths and traditions of ancient times edited by unknown "redactors." And so the Hittites were easily consigned to the morgue of oblivion, and the arrogance of the destructive critic found new meat to feed upon.

But the lost Hittites have been found, and the reckless claims of their forgetters have taken their place in the morgue. Again has the homely saying been justified, "It's better not to know so many things than to know so many things tain't so." Again it has been demonstrated that "the dust of ages is a great historian." How, then, were the Hittites rescued from oblivion, and what testimony has given them a place in the hall of history? It is a very interesting story, too long to be told here in detail, but some of its outstanding features are worthy of being presented. It is another and a very marked triumph of the spade.

Nearly fifty years ago it was affirmed that "the light of the nineteenth century A. D. reveals to us the existence of a Hittite power in the nineteenth century B. C., and enables us to follow the fortunes of that power down to 717 B. C., when the Hittite empire was finally crushed on the fatal field of Carchemish." This light has steadily grown clearer as the result of widespread and faithful research among the ruins of ancient cities and the decipherment of imperishable documents, so that he would indeed be a foolhardy critic who would dare to deny the fact of this long-lost empire, although he might relieve the tension of his feelings by claiming that the references to the Hittites by Biblical writers do not show their acquaintance with the times "in a very favorable light." Such a transparent effort to save his face can easily be winked at, in view of the completeness of the victory of archeology.

C. R. Conder, the English explorer, contributes some valuable material on the Hittites to *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia* from which this extract is taken:

The Hittites were known to the Assyrians as *Hatti*, and to the

Egyptians as *Kheta*, and their history has been very fully recovered from the records of the XVIIIth and XIXth Egyptian dynasties, from the Amarna tablets, from Assyrian annals, and, quite recently, from copies of letters addressed to Babylonian rulers by the Hittite kings, discovered by Dr. H. Winckler in the ruins of Boghaz-keui (‘the town of the pass’), the ancient Pterium in Pontus east of the river Halys. The earliest known notice is in the reign of Saamsu-ditana, the last king of the first Babylonian dynasty, about 2000 B. C., when the Hittites marched on the ‘land of Akkad,’ or ‘highlands,’ north of Mesopotamia.¹

A great variety of ancient documents have been discovered and translated which furnish abundant testimony concerning this long-lost and forgotten people. I can make use of only a part of this material. Their first recorded appearance in history is thus set forth:

The earliest reference to the Hittites which we have in any written record occurs in a Babylonian chronicle, which states that ‘against Shamsu-ditana the men of the country Khattu marched.’ Shamsu-ditana was the last king of the first dynasty of Babylon. His reign terminated in 1924 B. C. Khattu land, as will appear further on, was the name later given to the Hittite settlement in Cappadocia.²

There is a clear correspondence between the Biblical statements concerning the Hittites and the records which have been unearthed in the East. One writer refers to this in a convincing way:

The divine promise, in which Abraham’s posterity receives the land of the Hittites, points to a people stretching to the river Euphrates—‘unto the great river, the river Euphrates’—and the Babylonian records, read in our day for the first time in two millenniums, point to the Hittites firmly established in the neighborhood of Carchemish 1900 B. C., and show that they had already adopted the elements of Babylonian art and civilization.

The two chief cities of the Hittites were Kadesh on the Orontes, the modern Tell Neby Mendeh, and Carchemish on the upper Euphrates, now called Jerabîs, and between these two cities lies the region from south of Hamah unto the great river Euphrates. Surely such a marvellous coincidence as this between the Bible and the Babylonian inscriptions, with reference to events on the very outer horizon of history, should compel any candid scholar to accord the same credence

¹ P. 1396.

² *Archæology and the Bible*, p. 75. By George A. Barton. The American Sunday School Union, Philadelphia.

at least to the book of Genesis as to the tablets of Sargon. The Rev. T. K. Cheyne, however, referring to the Bible statements regarding the Hittites, declares they 'cannot be taken as of equal authority with Egyptian and Assyrian inscriptions.' Yet we find the Assyrian chronology by Professor Sayce, and the Bible chronology by Ussher, practically agreeing as to a state of facts over 3,780 years ago. If the tablets of Sargon are correct in this instance, the Tôrah of Moses must also be correct, for they are in perfect accord. If the king of Agané's astrological records are strictly historical, the statement in the Pentateuch must also be strictly historical. Those who accept the record of this inscription must also accept the record of the Bible. They appeal from the Bible to ancient inscriptions, and the stony records of forgotten ages condemn them and confirm the historic accuracy of the Bible.³

In discussing "the light cast by archeology on the relations of Israel to the great powers with which, in so many ways, it was brought in contact," a recognized authority speaks thus:

And first may be mentioned the remarkable corroborations of Scripture in its reference to the existence and power of the Hittites. In the books of Joshua and Kings are found various references which imply the existence of a great and formidable Hittite empire or confederacy north of Palestine, and this long after, as well as before, the Israelites had obtained possession of Canaan. Thus, in Joshua 1: 4: 'From the wilderness and this Lebanon, even unto the great river, the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites.' In I Kings 10: 28, 29, we are told of chariots and horses being brought from Egypt for 'all the kings of the Hittites.' Still later, in II Kings 7: 6, we read of a flight of the Syrians occasioned by the belief that the king of Israel had hired against them 'the kings of the Hittites and the kings of the Egyptians.' As, however, no ancient writer knew anything about such a power, these Scriptural allusions to them were, as usual, treated as unhistorical, or as mere rhetorical flourishes. . . . Now, it will hardly be disputed that the statements of Scripture on this subject are confirmed to the letter. Alike from Egyptian and from Assyrian inscriptions we learn that this Hittite people were for nearly 1000 years a great ruling power in Syria and Western Asia, extending their influence eastward as far as the Euphrates. They had, in short, an empire hardly less great than Egypt and Assyria themselves. The kings of the eighteenth and nineteenth dynasties in Egypt conducted extensive campaigns against them, the events of which constitute a considerable part of their annals. But beyond this their own abundant monuments, inscribed with a hieroglyphic which scholars are still busy attempting to decipher, now discover to us what manner of people they were, and testify to the wide range of their supremacy. It is already known that the

³ *The Empire of the Hittites*, pp. 95-97. By William Wright. Scribner and Welford.

Hittite language was not a Semitic, but an Aryan, tongue, and Jensen has thrown out the conjecture that the Hittites of the monuments were the ancestors of the Modern Armenians. It seems evident that the Biblical books in which these references to the Hittites occur must have been written when the power of that people was yet in the ascendant, else the writers would have blundered in regard to them like others.⁴

During the present century most important testimony concerning the Hittites has been dug up by the explorers, probably the most notable instance being the finding of the capital of this ancient people in the heart of Cappadocia, and the unearthing of more very informing documents. This work was first carried on under the general direction of the German archeologist, Hugo Winckler, during the years 1905-1907, and further excavations were carried on by the Archeological Institute of the German Reich and the Deutsche Orient-Gesellschaft, two short tentative diggings being made in 1931 and 1932, and a more thorough investigation in 1933. A summary of the results of Winckler's expedition was published in the Smithsonian Institute Report for 1908, from which the following paragraphs are taken:

The 'Hittites' were considered, primarily, as a people of Asia Minor. It became more and more apparent that they entered into the history of Syria since about the sixteenth century B. C., and the significance of this fact was fully appreciated.

From the Tel el-Amarna letters we learn that a people closely related to the Chatti [Khatti] had at that time pushed its conquests as far as the borders of Babylonia. A recently discovered Babylonian chronicle informs us that the fall of the first Babylonian dynasty, of which Hammurabi was the middle king, was due to an attack of the Chatti. As this attack must have taken place about 1800 B. C., we are thus afforded chronologically definite information of the appearance of this people and their empire.

The accounts in all these documents proved that the center of 'Hittite' power had been not in Syria, as was at first believed, but in Asia Minor, though in what part of that country could not be definitely settled. Almost all of the inscriptions in 'Hittite' script had come from the region of the Taurus, or southern part of Asia Minor, but this region could not have formed the center of a great empire. The other alternative pointed to Cappadocia which, lying in the very heart of Asia Minor, would be a fit center for a civilized power.⁵

⁴ *The Problem of the Old Testament*, pp. 424-426. By James Orr. Chas. Scribner's Sons.

⁵ Pp. 677, 678.

In the summer of 1907 the work of excavation was resumed on the slope of a mountain which had been a fortified citadel:

The higher the digging ascended the larger was the size of the tablets found, till in places large tablets were ranged in layers. There is no question that we have here to do with the remains of royal archives, though they represent only a small remnant of the original contents.

About midway of the declivity was found the document which established the fact that the site represented the capital of Chatti empire. The contents of this document were not new; they were in Babylonian language and writing, and formed parts of the treaty of Ramses II [king of Egypt] with the Cheta King Chetasar, as he has been usually called, or Hattusil, as now proven by the cuneiform script. The text had long been known, being inscribed on the walls of the temple of Karnak.

It was thus ascertained beyond doubt that the tablets belonged to the royal archives, and that consequently the site represented the capital.⁶

As the result of the excavations made in 1931 under the direction of Dr. Kurt Bittel more than two hundred and fifty fragments of cuneiform tablets were discovered, many of them in the rubbish used as filling in the walls. A report of this work was given by Dr. Bittel in *Mitteilungen der Deutschen Orient-Gesellschaft* for May, 1932, and the results were discussed at some length by Dr. Hans Ehelolf in the same number.

The significance of this discovery and its effect upon some of the theories formerly maintained concerning the non-existence of such a people as the Hittites, have been well stated by a conservative writer:

The inhabitants of old Troy were no more in need of a Schliemann to justify their claim to a right of real existence and a place in history than the Hittites of some friendly discoverer to deliver them from the serious suspicion of—to say the least—legendary accretions of character, if not of unreality. In 1906 the deliverer came. Winckler uncovered the ruins at Boghatz-keui and brought to light, in addition to architectural ruins and a treasury of inscriptions in Hittite hieroglyphs, also tablets of cuneiform script. Among these latter was found the Hittite copy of the same treaty of peace between Rameses II and the 'Kheta.' What these tablets, now being translated and carefully studied, may yet reveal concerning the Hittites and what vast and amazing additions to learning may come with the decipherment of the Hittite hieroglyphs themselves, an event which certainly cannot much longer be delayed,

⁶ *Id.*, p. 680.

no one can tell. Already there is this important result: no one is saying now that 'no such people as the Hittites ever existed.'⁷

Among the incidents recorded in the book of Genesis which have been labeled as mythical by some of the learned critics of modern times, is the story of the purchase of a burial-place from "Ephron the Hittite" by Abraham. According to the record in the twenty-third chapter of Genesis this transaction took place at Hebron, a town of southern Palestine, west of the center of the Dead Sea. The higher critic classes this story among the mythical tales of ancient time. And for what sufficient reason? Well, there is no reason, sufficient or otherwise, but the alleged reason is that, according to the judgment of the critic, which of course is infallible, there were no Hittites in southern Palestine at that time. Furthermore, he asserts that the Hittites were a warlike people, not given to such a peaceful occupation as selling land. But what is the answer of archeology to such mere assumptions? Here it is:

Not only is the transaction between Abraham and the Hittites at Hebron so entirely in accord with general experience and local usage as to require no collateral corroboration, but there seems to be some evidence from Egyptian inscriptions as to the existence of the Hittites on the borders of Egypt at a very remote period. The stone now in the Louvre [in Paris], of the time of Amenemhat, of the twelfth dynasty, contains an inscription which refers to the overthrow of Hittite palaces in that region; and Brugsch Bey, referring to the record of the Hittites in this inscription, says: 'The mention of the last-named people at this time is extremely remarkable, for it appears to prove that at this time the Hittites were close to Egypt.'

Dr. Isaac Taylor, referring to the extent of the Hittite Empire, says: 'Dr Schliemann's discoveries at Troy and the Hittite monuments scattered over Asia Minor, as far west as the neighborhood of Smyrna, prove the extent of their empire to the west; while to the south, at a time prior to the exodus of the Hebrews, their dominion extended as far as Hebron' (*The Alphabet*, Vol. II, p. 121). . . . The story as told in Genesis is true in all the formal details which embellish the framework of a shrewd Oriental bargain. It is in accordance with all that we know of such nations as the Hittites to push out their surplus and enterprising population along the highways of their commerce. . . . And it is quite in accordance with the known instincts of such a colony to sell as a favor for a large sum a useless field with a useless

⁷ *The Deciding Voice of the Monuments in Biblical Criticism*, p. 109. By Melvin Grove Kyle. Bibliotheca Sacra Company.

cave. We think the accuracy of the Bible has never been challenged on more frivolous grounds.⁸

The same writer refers to the temple at Karnak known as "the Hall of Pillars" on the walls and pillars of which are found pictures and names of the peoples whom Thothmes III, the builder of the temple, had conquered. "A few years ago the sand was removed from the wall of a lower story, and revealed a catalogue of 119 conquered places. The first place mentioned on this list is Kadesh on the Orontes." The following comment upon this list is of interest:

What gives its highest value to this catalogue is the indisputable fact that, more than 300 years before the entrance of the Israelites into the land of Canaan, a great confederacy of tribes of a common race, which the monuments call by the name of Ruthen, existed in Palestine under petty kings, who dwelt in the very same towers and fortresses (as recorded on the monuments) which, for the most part, in later times fell by conquest into the hands of the Jewish immigrants. Among these the king of Kadesh on the Orontes, in the land of the Amorites—as the inscriptions expressly testify—played the first part; for the kings and their peoples from the water of Egypt (the same as the brook which the Bible makes the boundary of Egypt) to the river-land Naharain (afterwards called Mesopotamia) obeyed him as their chief leader.⁹

After a somewhat extended comparison between the instances where the Hittites are referred to in the Scriptures and the records upon the many tablets and monuments corroborating these references, a student of this subject bears this testimony:

Thus the Hittites, who appear for the first time in the inscriptions of Sargon I, king of Agané, cir. 1900 B. C., disappear from history in the inscriptions of Sargon B. C. 717. They were a people before Abraham went forth from Ur of the Chaldees, and they only yielded to the arms of Assyria after the Israelites had been swept from Samaria. During the history of the chosen people, from the time of Abraham to the captivity, the Hittites are often referred to in the Bible. These references have been discredited by professed assailants and by weak apologists of the historic accuracy of the Bible. We have examined the contemporary records of Babylon, Assyria, and Egypt, and we find

⁸ *The Empire of the Hittites*, pp. 98-101. By William Wright. Scribner and Welford.

⁹ *A History of Egypt Under the Pharaohs*, Vol. I, p. 394. By Henry Brugsch-Bey. Chas. Scribner's Sons.

not only collateral evidence, which creates a probability in favor of the authenticity of the sacred narrative, but side lights, which shine so clearly on the incidents that unbelief is impossible.¹⁰

The monuments have spoken. The inscriptions have borne their testimony. The ancient documents have corroborated both of these sources of information. They all unite in absolutely denying the claims of the higher critic and the modernist. The Hittites are a historical people of ancient times, who acted an important part along with the Assyrians and the Egyptians. In a most convincing way has the spade of the archeologist confirmed our faith in the trustworthiness of the Bible in respect to its many references to this people.

¹⁰ *The Empire of the Hittites*, pp. 122, 123. By William Wright. Scribner and Welford.

VIII

ISRAEL AND THE EXODUS

The systematic historical description, the account of the wanderings which is as exact geographically as it is historically, and in which we find a number of small details that would have been valueless and unknown to later writers, and above all else the accurate dating by the sacred lunar periods of an early age, appear to demand as their original basis the existence of written documents contemporaneous with Moses himself.

—DITLEF NIELSON.

THERE goes the electric bell! It is the signal for a change of classes. Now the halls are filled with students passing to their respective classes. Which class shall we visit? I suggest the class in history. Very good, here is the room. Let us listen to the recitation.

Question.—When and by whom was America discovered?

Answer.—Well, that depends upon whom you accept as authority. According to the traditional view America was discovered by Columbus in 1492, but some of the historical critics affirm that it was discovered much earlier by the Norsemen. I am not sure which statement is correct.

Question.—Are you sure that it was discovered at some time by someone?

Answer.—Oh yes, I am sure of that.

Question.—What proof do you have?

Answer.—Why, it must have been discovered at some time, because we live in America ourselves.

Question.—Now going back into ancient history, when did the Israelites go out of Egypt?

Answer.—That is a hard question to answer with certainty. The traditional date is 1491 B. C., according to the chronology of Ussher, but there is quite a difference of opinion. Clinton favors 1660; Garstang 1447; some scholars advocate a date somewhere between 1207 and 1328. Many Rabbis have agreed upon 1220. What can the ordinary student say?

Question.—Are you sure that the Israelites actually went out of Egypt at any time?

Answer.—Yes, I am convinced of that.

Question.—What is your proof?

Answer.—Well, the Bible testifies to the fact, although it does not fix the exact date. Furthermore, the independent testimony of archeology confirms the trustworthiness of the Bible, so far as the fact is concerned.

Question.—Does our confidence in the accuracy of the Scriptures depend upon our being able to determine authoritatively the exact date of the Exodus?

Answer.—No, indeed. The fact, and not the exact time, is the really important thing. At the same time I should think it would be worth while to try to find at least an approximate date which would be in harmony with the plain statements of the Bible concerning other historical events.

Question.—Can you suggest any good reason why the Bible does not place more emphasis upon an exact chronology?

Answer.—I have often thought about that. The best answer I have ever heard is that the prime purpose of the Bible is to teach the gospel, while the historical facts serve as the setting for this gospel. Yet it is true that where time is an important element, as in some of the prophecies, the definite period is exactly stated.

Again the bell rings, and the class is dismissed, while we are left to ponder over the questions raised and the answers given.

Before entering upon a study of the stay of the children of Israel in Egypt, and their deliverance, we may well give some attention to the facts as set forth in the Bible. The outstanding facts are so familiar to the reader of the Scriptures that it will not be necessary to quote the testimony of the Biblical writers to establish them, but only to interpret them.

In connection with the significant experience of Abraham in which the gospel of righteousness by faith was taught to, and accepted by, him (Gen. 15: 1-6), the sojourning of his seed and their sufferings were foretold (Gen. 15: 13). When the deliverance came, it was in exact fulfilment of the prophecy and promise, even to a day (Ex. 12: 41). In the song which was sung in commemoration of this experience this deliverance is spoken of as a redemption (Ex. 15: 13), and it became the customary thing for the children of Israel to refer to it as a basis for confidence in Jehovah as the God of unlimited power, "able to save to the uttermost." This continued until the restoration of the captives from Babylon; and so we read: "Therefore, behold, the days come, saith Jehovah, that it shall no more be said, As Jehovah liveth, that brought up the children of Israel

out of the land of Egypt; but, As Jehovah liveth, that brought up the children of Israel from the land of the north, and from all the countries whither he had driven them " (Jer. 16: 14, 15).

Furthermore, the name Jehovah as the redeeming name, the covenant name, of God is closely linked up with the redemption of the children of Israel from Egypt (Ex. 6: 2-7). The power of the cross as the power for victory and deliverance is clearly suggested in the promise, "I will redeem you with an outstretched arm" (V. 6. Cf. Ex. 17: 11-13; John 21: 18, 19). It is also interesting and instructive to note that before the Israelites ever came into Egypt God had provided an efficient helper for them, but at the cost of suffering on the part of the helper. "He sent a man before them; Joseph was sold for a servant; his feet were hurt with fetters; he was laid in chains of iron" (Ps. 105: 17, 18). There is an evident parallel between the experience of Joseph and that of Christ. Joseph was sold for money; so was Christ. A contributing cause of the trying to get rid of Joseph was envy; so it was in the case of Christ. Joseph was falsely accused; so was Christ. Joseph suffered the penalty of the false accusation; so did Christ. After enduring the suffering imposed upon him Joseph was exalted to a high position in the kingdom; so was Christ. Joseph is not specifically designated in the Scriptures as a type of Christ, but there is certainly a remarkable parallelism between the experiences of these two persons.

The signs which were wrought in the presence of the Israelites to establish the divine leadership of Moses and Aaron were of such a character that the people were convinced that "Jehovah had visited the children of Israel" (Ex. 4: 31). So also after Christ had raised to life the widow's son, the people who saw this miraculous exhibition of divine power were constrained to believe that "God hath visited his people" (Luke 7: 16).

When Stephen was given an opportunity to defend himself against the charge that he had declared that "Jesus of Nazareth shall destroy this place, and shall change the customs which Moses delivered unto us" (Acts 6: 14), a large part of his defence consisted of a review of the experience of the children of Israel in going down into Egypt, their stay there ending in their oppression, and their deliverance under the leadership of Moses (Acts 7: 9-40). When Paul preached his sermon in

Antioch of Pisidia, his introduction consisted of a brief reference to the experience of the children of Israel in Egypt, and their being brought forth out of it (Acts 13: 17, 18). It is evident, therefore, that these preachers regarded the deliverance from Egypt as the historical experience in which was taught the reality of the deliverance from the bondage of sin which is provided through the work of Christ.

From these and other considerations which might be suggested it is certainly clear that Israel in Egypt is one of the outstanding features of the story of redemption as taught in the Bible, and that Jacob, Joseph, Moses, and Joshua are actual historical characters who cannot be transformed by philosophical critics into merely allegorical characters without destroying confidence in the reliability of the Scriptures as a whole. In view of this fundamental fact, we may well be interested in learning whether there is any testimony outside the Scriptures which tends to confirm faith in the Biblical record concerning Israel in Egypt.

Manetho, the Greek historian (about 300 B. C.), wrote a history of Egypt in Greek. This history as a whole has been lost, but in his treatise *Against Apion* Josephus made quite a number of extracts from it, from which it is plain that Manetho testified to the fact of the Israelites in Egypt. (See *Contra Apion*, Whiston's Translation of *The Works of Flavius Josephus*, Vol. 2, pp. 457-459.)

When we remember that the Israelites migrated to Egypt in order to escape the famine which prevailed at that time in Judea, that they were shepherds and therefore not acceptable to the Egyptians, and that they finally became slaves to them, we naturally could not expect that a record of their doings would be found upon the monuments and inscriptions of Egypt. There are, however, some facts which incidentally confirm the Biblical record. Here is one of them:

The name Moses has been proved to be of Egyptian derivation. When Jochebed brought the child back to the princess, Pharaoh's daughter, the latter gave her adopted son the Egyptian name 'Moses,' which appears in several of the old Egyptian papyri, among others as that of one of the royal princes. The name is given in Exodus as meaning 'Drawn out from the water' (Ex. 2: 10); and this is corroborated by the fact that the words *mo* and *shi*, respectively, mean still, in Coptic, 'water' and 'to take.' There is no question but that it is a Hebraized form of an Egyptian name, the original form having

been *Mesu*, which often appears in Egyptian writings, and was written 'Mosis' by the Greeks.¹

Of the rearing of Moses we read: "And the child grew, and she brought him unto Pharaoh's daughter, and he became her son. And she called his name Moses, and said, Because I drew him out of the water" (Ex. 2: 10).

In connection with this brief record of a very unusual experience the following extract is of real interest:

There is another remarkable coincidence of this epoch with the narrative in Exodus. One can hardly help comparing the famous Queen Hatshepsut with the 'Pharaoh's daughter' who rescued Moses from the basket of papyrus reeds (Ex. 2: 5 ff.). In the tomb prepared for her but never utilized, she is described several times on the sarcophagus as 'king's daughter.' 'O king's daughter, king's sister, wife of the god, great wife of the king, Hatshepsut!' If the story of Moses' birth and adoption be authentic, and not a Babylonian fairy-tale as some scholars suggest, the comparison is interesting and almost perfect. This wise, energetic, and peace-loving woman was the daughter of Thutmose I (c. 1545-1514 B. C.). She is believed to have been born about 1532 B. C., and to have died about 1479 B. C. She was one of the most interesting figures in history, and exercised rule for about 35 years altogether, viz. 13 before her brother (or nephew) Thutmose III began to reign, and 22 years in association with him. She was a princess of strong character, and a very important factor in the politics of the time. . . .

It is at least a very singular coincidence that, on the theory we are advocating, Moses must have been born about the very time that this 'bold and clever' princess, as Brugsch calls her, was young and rising into power, and one cannot fail to connect her with the 'Pharaoh's daughter' who is said to have adopted him.²

The Scripture says that "Pharaoh called Joseph's name Zaphnath-paneah" (Gen. 41: 45). The significance of this Egyptian name furnishes another interesting confirmation of the reliability of the inspired record. A good authority declares:

The identification of Joseph's name among Egyptian names which meets the fewest difficulties and accords most exactly with the narrative in the Bible is illustrated by certain royal names from the time just preceding the days of Joseph. 'Zaph' is the significant, as well

¹ *Mounds, Monuments and Inscriptions*, pp. 142, 143. By Mark B. Chapman. Cokesbury Press.

² *The Date of the Exodus in the Light of External Evidence*, pp. 251-253. By J. W. Jack. Chas. Scribner's Sons.

as troublesome, part of Joseph's name, the rest of it is descriptive and very simple in the Egyptian. The royal names of the time of Joseph are also compounded with this word 'Zaph.' The phonetic equivalency is most exact and the meaning of the whole name becomes most appropriate. 'The one who furnishes the nourishment of life,' i.e., the 'Steward of the realm.'³

Another bit of testimony which, to say the least, is suggestive of the work of Joseph, has recently come to light. Here is an interesting statement concerning it:

Archeological evidence, which thus far in the career of Joseph has, for the most part, only cleared difficulties out of the way, now becomes positive concerning the great work of Joseph the Prime Minister. In the tomb of one Baba at el-Kab, now unfortunately much mutilated, is an inscription of the time of Se-Kennen-Ra-Taa III, a vassal king of Upper Egypt under the Hyksos rulers. Exact dates are here impossible, but the time of this king and of this inscription is known to be about the time of Apophis, the traditional Pharaoh of Joseph according to Syncellus. Thus far none of the identifications between the story of Baba and the history of Joseph are absolutely certain, but when we read the inscription as it appeared in Brugsch's day, the parallelism of the two accounts of certain events in the empire becomes most suggestive. Baba says 'I collected corn, as a friend of the harvest god. I was watchful at the time of sowing, And when a famine arose, lasting many years, I distributed corn to the city each year of famine.'

The coincidences between this narrative and that of the famine recorded in the Bible in the story of Joseph are most striking. Great famines in Egypt are most rare and the details of this narrative of Baba follow very closely the details of the famine story of the days of Joseph. There were years of plenty when grain could be stored up, government provision for storing it, a great famine 'lasting many years,' distribution of aid to the starving people from the government storehouses, and the final success of the comprehensive plan of the government, which extended its beneficence from the Capital at the city of Zoan far into Upper Egypt; and all this took place during Hyksos rule at the period to which the Bible account assigns the premiership of Joseph. The substantiation of the credibility of the Biblical narrative is complete, and the corroboration of the actuality of the events narrated in the story of Joseph becomes very strong.⁴

Toward the close of the sojourn of the children of Israel in Egypt "there arose a new king over Egypt, who knew not Joseph" (Ex. 1: 8), and who became fearful that these foreigners

³ *The Deciding Voice of the Monuments in Biblical Criticism*, pp. 261, 262. By Melvin Grove Kyle. Bibliotheca Sacra Company.

⁴ *Id.*, pp. 263, 264.

might join his enemy in case of war, and so contribute to the conquest of his country. It was therefore decided to make slaves of the descendants of Jacob and Joseph, and so "they did set over them taskmasters to afflict them with their burdens. And they built for Pharaoh store cities, Pithom and Raamses" (Ex. 1: 11).

Again has the spade of the excavator uncovered ancient cities and furnished confirmation of the Bible record. Pithom and Raamses have both been discovered and identified. The facts are as follows:

The site of Pithom was identified in 1883 by Prof. Edouard Naville. Its modern Arabic name, Tel-el-Maskhutah, 'Mound of the Statue,' is derived from a monolith of red granite, cut in the form of an arm-chair, on which are seated three Egyptian figures, now known to represent Raamses II between two solar gods Ra and Tum. It is situated on the south side of the sweet-water canal which runs from Cairo to Suez through the Wadi Tumilat, about twelve miles from Ismailiah. Prof. Naville found a number of inscriptions which show not only that the site represents an ancient city whose religious name was Pi Tum ('the abode of Tum'), while its civil name was Thuku (Succoth), but also that the founder of the city was Raamses II. . . . The 'store-chambers' themselves have now been uncovered. They were very strongly constructed, and divided by brick partitions from eight to ten feet thick, the bricks being sun-baked, and made, some with and some without straw. . . . From a personal examination, Prof. Kyle was able to confirm it [the testimony of Naville] in the following words: 'Every point in the story of the insurrection is written upon the ruins at Pithom. The place was called Pithom; it was a store-city; the bricks were laid in "mortar," contrary to the usual Egyptian method of brick-work; the bricks in the lower courses were filled with good clean straw, those of the middle courses were made with stubble mixed with weeds and all pulled up by the roots, while the bricks of the upper courses were made of Nile mud without the admixture of any binding material whatever; and all these things were found in the ancient region of Succoth as the Bible asserts.'

As to Raamses, its excavator, Prof. Flinders Petrie, writes as follows: 'The city of Raamses, now Tell Rotab, is about twelve miles along the narrow marshy valley; and Pithom, now Tell-el-Maskhutah, is about ten miles farther east. The city of Raamses is identified by remains of a town and temple built by Raamses II. . . . Pithom and Raamses were built by the Israelites, under the Pharaoh of the oppression as store-cities. The archeological record corresponds exactly. Both cities have been excavated and identified, both were store-cities, both were built under Raamses II, and both were in the district of Succoth.'⁵

⁵ *The Exodus in the Light of Archaeology*, pp. 44, 45. By J. S. Griffiths. Robert Scott.

Another account of the discovery of Pithom furnishes additional particulars concerning the structure of this city:

The buildings were all of brick, and some of these bricks are in the British Museum, and in the Metropolitan Museum of New York, and are usually from four to eight inches square and one and a half to two inches thick. They are unbaked, but very hard. Under the city were great subterranean store chambers, occupying almost the entire area, just as Moses says the children of Israel built. These were solidly built square chambers of various sizes, divided by massive partition walls about ten feet in thickness, without doors or any kind of communication, evidently intended to be filled and emptied from the top by means of trapdoors and ladders. The building material consisted of large bricks, which were formed of Nile mud, pressed in a wooden mold and dried in the sun. They were also bedded in mortar, contrary to the usual method in the delta, which was to bed them in mud, which dries immediately and holds almost as tenaciously as mortar. This recalls the story in Exodus that Pharaoh's overseers 'made the children of Israel to serve with rigor; and made their lives bitter with hard bondage, in mortar and in brick.' (Ex. 1: 13, 14.)⁶

The time for denying that the children of Israel were in Egypt has long since gone by. The Bible history is authentic. Archeology confirms the Bible record in the most convincing way. The mouth of the scoffer is stopped. Faith in God's word is again abundantly justified. We certainly have "the word of prophecy made more sure."

⁶ *Mounds, Monuments and Inscriptions*, pp. 138, 139. By Mark B. Chapman. Cokesbury Press.

IX

JEHOVAH'S EMANCIPATION PROCLAMATION

The evidence from archeology has not as yet proved the patriarchs to be persons and the patriarchal narratives to be history, but as far as it goes it all tends in that direction by providing suitable historical setting for the narratives, thus lifting them in nearly every case above the reach of reasonable suspicion.—The Deciding Voice of the Monuments in Biblical Criticism, MELVIN GROVE KYLE.

VERY few of those who read this book can remember the civil war in the United States, or the slaves in the Southland previous to that conflict. All readers of American history, however, are familiar with the fact that there were slaves in those days and that they were set free. By whose authority was freedom conferred upon them? On the first day of January, 1863, Abraham Lincoln, the president of the United States, and commander-in-chief of the army, issued a proclamation in which he declared that "all persons held as slaves . . . are, and henceforward shall be free." How simple! Only a few short words, and the condition of hundreds of thousands was changed from that of abject slavery to perfect freedom. True, but back of those few words there was proper authority, or they would have been mere sounds.

Three or four thousand years ago the Israelites were slaves in Egypt. No one disputes this fact except those who would transform ancient Bible history into myth, or who would relegate the whole Bible to the waste basket. Later the same people were settled in Palestine, a free and independent nation. When and how did they become free? When and by what route did they go from Egypt to Palestine? How did they get possession of this latter country? The Bible answers these questions in a clear and authoritative manner.

The proclamation of emancipation issued by Jehovah to the king of Egypt was brief but authoritative: "Let my people go that they may hold a feast unto me in the wilderness" (Ex. 5: 1). Note the words "My people." The King of heaven acknowledges the slaves of the king of Egypt as His people. To Moses at the

burning bush Jehovah declared, "I have surely seen the affliction of my people that are in Egypt" (Ex. 3: 7). This special relationship was established by the covenant-promise made to Abraham long before the servitude in Egypt. Here it is: "And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee and unto thy seed after thee. And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land of thy sojournings, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God" (Gen. 17: 7, 8). Without attempting here to develop the full meaning of this covenant-promise, it is sufficient to say that it could not be fulfilled as long as the children of Israel were bondmen in Egypt, and therefore it involved their deliverance.

Back, then, of the emancipation proclamation in behalf of the Israelites was the purpose of God expressed in a direct promise, and confirmed by His oath. The very existence of God was pledged for the fulfilment of this promise, and the words, "My people," were the assurance that God had not forgotten His undertaking. Indeed, it is stated plainly, "And God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob" (Ex. 2: 24). There came, then, a direct clash between the promise of the King of heaven and the response to the message of Jehovah on the part of the king of Egypt, who replied, "I know not Jehovah, and moreover I will not let Israel go" (Ex. 5: 2). The outcome vindicated the authority of the God of Israel who did "wondrous works in the land of Ham," so that the king of Egypt "called for Moses and Aaron by night, and said, Rise up, get you forth from among my people, both ye and the children of Israel; and go, serve Jehovah, as ye have said" (Ex. 12: 31). Nay more, we are assured that "Egypt was glad when they departed" (Ps. 105: 38). And so they went out, not as the result of a revolution or an armed conflict, but "the Egyptians were urgent upon the people, to send them out of the land in haste" (Ex. 12: 33). The word of Jehovah made them "more than conquerors."

But is there any reliable testimony from other sources which corroborates to any extent the inspired record? There is, and it is worthy of thoughtful consideration.

In the first place I must admit without reservation that there is

no connected record, either in part or in whole, of these events outside of the Scriptures. The name Israel occurs only once upon any inscription in all Egyptian history. Shall we therefore conclude that the Israelites were never in Egypt? By no means. The proof cited in the previous chapter positively forbids any such conclusion. At one time they were the bondservants of the king of Egypt. Later they were found in another country. At some time they must have left Egypt. By some route they must have traveled to the other country. It is true that archeology furnishes no direct proof which definitely establishes the date of the exodus, and we do not suffer any great loss even if we are unable to determine just when the oppressed Israelites were permitted to leave Egypt. Such details as are recorded in the Scriptures are important as features of the history of redemption, rather than as establishing a chronology. The impressive fact is that a people who were in bondage under a merciless king and utterly unable to deliver themselves, were delivered through the exercise of the miracle working power of Jehovah. So it is in personal experience. It is the fact of conversion rather than the date which is essential. The important question is not, *When* was I converted? but, *Am* I converted? We know that the children of Israel were in bondage and were delivered from it, and these two historical facts teach the central truth of the gospel—deliverance from the slavery of sin by the power of God. It is not necessary to determine the exact time of the exodus from Egypt in order to be able to apply to our experience the divine lesson which this remarkable event is intended to convey. While no inscriptions or other documents have been found which testify directly to the sojourn of the children of Israel in Egypt, yet there is much indirect confirmation of this historical event. This field has been carefully studied, and the results are worthy of attention. Note some of them:

It is well to call attention to the many incidental statements made in Genesis and Exodus regarding the habits and customs of the Egyptians, which show that they are pictures faithfully drawn from life. All of the chapters which relate to Egypt show a marked familiarity with that country, and many interesting illustrations of statements or allusions contained in the narrative have been supplied by the monuments. That Joseph shaved himself and changed his raiment before coming into Pharaoh's presence (Gen. 41:14) is in agreement with what we know to have been an Egyptian custom; for all respectable Egyptians

shaved themselves, and on the monuments only foreigners and natives of inferior rank are represented as wearing beards. The frequent repetition of the number *seven* in Pharaoh's dream (Gen. 41: 18-36) was in accordance with the sanctity of the number seven among the Egyptians, for it was to them a sacred and magical number. In prescriptions seven drugs were often prescribed; and in charms seven objects were taken. Among the numerous forms of Hat-Hor, seven are often in particular specified; and in the 'Book of the Dead' mention is made of the seven sacred kine with their bull, who provide food and drink for the dead, and whose good services the deceased invokes Ra (Osiris) to secure on his behalf. When Pharaoh 'took off his ring from his hand, and put it on Joseph's hand, and put a gold chain about his neck,' he was giving him a token of authority, which, while it was a custom in other countries, was notably so in Egypt, where the 'keeper of the seal' was the king's deputy. The golden collar was a peculiarly Egyptian form of decoration, and was called 'receiving gold,' on seven different occasions for various acts of valor. Several pictures on the monuments represent the Pharaohs as adorning their officers with chains of gold, one illustration being that of Amenophis IV, and another of Seti I. These collars were often of massive and costly workmanship.¹

There is a decided difference of opinion as to the length of the stay of the children of Israel in Egypt. Some scholars maintain that their sojourn in that country was 430 years, while others adhere to a period of 215 years or thereabouts. Although there is no positive archeological evidence which can be cited to determine exactly the length of this period, yet it seems worth while in this connection to give some consideration to such an interesting and fairly important question with the hope that the historical record in the Scriptures may be satisfactorily confirmed. The texts bearing upon this subject are discussed in the following extract:

To a cursory reader of Genesis and Exodus in the English versions, the period of the sojourn in Egypt seems to have been 400 or 430 years. In Genesis 15 the prediction to Abraham runs thus: 'And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs and shall serve them, and they shall afflict them; four hundred years.' Here it does not at first appear to the reader that the period of 400 years covers not merely the affliction but the whole sojourn, though this is evidently the intention. In Exodus 12: 40, 41, the termination of the period is given with great precision as follows: 'Now the sojourn of the children of Israel who dwelt

¹ *Mounds, Monuments and Inscriptions*, pp. 172, 173. By Mark B. Chapman. Cokesbury Press.

in Egypt was four hundred and thirty years. And it came to pass at the end of four hundred and thirty years, even the self-same day it came to pass that all the hosts of the Lord went out from the land of Egypt.' Here the sojourning is that in Canaan as well as in Egypt. This we learn in three ways: (1) the genealogical lists in the same book show that the residence of the Israelites in Egypt from the time of the immigration of Jacob extended only about 216 years; (2) the Septuagint translation, to relieve what seems an ambiguity, or perhaps because their manuscripts were different from ours, add the words, 'and in the land of Canaan'; and this is just the sort of question on which we should specially value the authority of the Septuagint; (3) Paul in the Epistle to the Galatians states the whole period from the covenant with Abraham to the giving of the law at 430 years. We are thus enabled to conclude that the date so minutely given, even to a day, in Exodus 12 may be reckoned from the entry of Abraham into Canaan, and that the period of 430 years covers the whole of the sojourning which was to be the lot of his posterity till their return to Canaan as a conquering nation. This enables us to see in this chronology the hand of Moses. It was not his mission to regard the Israelites as merely the descendants of an immigrant Syrian chief who had come into Egypt about two centuries previously, but to direct his people to the promise made to Abraham, and to have them regard the whole of the sojourning, whether in Canaan or Egypt, as one episode in their history, to be terminated by their possessing the promised land. To Moses the oppression is merely the means of obliging Israel to fulfil its divinely ordained destiny, which it must fulfil whether Pharaoh and the Egyptians are friendly or hostile.²

The readers of the Bible are familiar with the fact that "Israel dwelt in Egypt, in the land of Goshen," but possibly they do not know the exact location of this district. The northern portion of Egypt has been so thoroughly investigated during the last century, more particularly during the last fifty years, that its history and geography are now very well known, especially in the many cases where the history and geography are related to the Biblical records. Do we now know where the land of Goshen is to be found? Let us read and see:

The situation of the 'land of Goshen,' occupied under the command of Pharaoh by the children of Israel (Gen. 47: 6), has been fully determined, and scholars and explorers are now agreed as to its location and limits. In 1884 M. Naville came accidentally upon a large village about 40 miles northeast of Cairo, called Saft-el-Henneh, where he observed a monument bearing the name of Nectanebo, the last of the

² J. W. Dawson. From *The Expositor*, Fourth Series, Vol. X, pp. 163, 164.

Pharaohs (367-359 B. C.), and which he at once saw was the site of a large ancient city, once occupied by the Romans, and inclosed by massive walls of crude brick. Excavating on this spot, he discovered the remains of a shrine erected by Nectanebo to the god Sopt, with inscriptions which showed that the place on which the shrine stood bore the name of *Kes*. Now ancient hieroglyphic lists of the 'Nomes,' or administrative districts of Egypt, mention *Kesem* as the twentieth nome of Lower Egypt, and state that its religious capital was *Pa-Sopt*. *Kesem* is only the older and fuller form of *Kes*, and in *Kesem* we have unmistakably the Greek *Gesem*, and the Hebrew *Goshen*, the land of the Israelitish bondage. The Septuagint has '*Gesem of Arabia*,' instead of *Goshen*, and we learn from Ptolemy that '*Arabia*' was the name of a nome in Lower Egypt, of which *Goshen* was undoubtedly a part. M. Naville says that the *Goshen* of the time of Joseph may be roughly reckoned as having its northern boundary from about the present railway junction of Zagazig, very near the ancient Bubastis, nearly to Tel-el-Kebir, and that it extends southward somewhat farther than Belbeis.³

Recall that last night which the children of Israel spent in *Goshen*. Hear the outcries in the homes of the Egyptians on account of the death of the firstborn. Note the change in the attitude of the king who had persistently refused to let his bond-slaves leave the country. It is the time of the triumph of weakness over an oppressive power. And what is the explanation? The God of Israel has undertaken their case, and is demonstrating the reliability of His covenant-promise. The gospel of deliverance is to be wrought into history and recorded for the instruction of future generations. "Whoso is wise will give heed to these things; and they will consider the lovingkindness of Jehovah."

³ *Mounds, Monuments and Inscriptions*, pp. 132, 133. By Mark B. Chapman. Cokesbury Press.

X

THE PATRIARCHS REAL PERSONS

The whole history of the descent into Egypt is most essentially reasonable and credible. Undoubted identifications confirm the topographic and ethnic notices in the patriarchal story; Egyptian descriptions substantiate the manners and customs depicted in the Bible; Egyptian scarabs confirm even the very name "Jacob" for that period in Egypt; Egyptian history furnishes a similar famine story; and attests the "abomination" in which "shepherds" were held; and the Egyptian funeral customs most exactly illustrate the funeral and the mourning for Jacob. This part of the patriarchal story fits, in every way, exactly into the age and the lands to which the Bible attributes it.—The Deciding Voice of the Monuments in Biblical Criticism, MELVIN GROVE KYLE.

THOSE who have not given special attention to the subject may be surprised to learn to what extent the radical interpreters of the Scriptures have gone in their efforts to discredit the authority of these writings. A suggestion of the results of this destructive criticism is found in a brief summary of its findings concerning the patriarchs, made by a conservative scholar:

Abraham and Lot are the same as the Gemini (a zodiacal constellation), called by the Romans Castor and Pollux. Abraham, together with his wife, who was also his sister, are forms of Tammuz (who was a solar god) and Ishtar, the former being the brother and bridegroom of the latter. As Ishtar was the daughter of Sin, the moon-god, Abraham must be a moon-god; for he went from Ur to Haran, two places dedicated to that deity. Many circumstances of the myths concerning Abraham corroborate this. The 318 men who were Abraham's allies, in the fourteenth chapter of Genesis, are the 318 days of the year when the moon is visible. All the Babylonian gods are represented by numbers. Kirjatharba, the one center of Abraham myths, means 'the city of Arba, or four.' Arba must then be the moon-god which has four phases. Beersheba, 'the seven wells,' another center with which the Abraham myths were identified, also represents the moon, because there are seven days in each phase of the moon. Isaac, who lived at Beersheba, must, therefore, also be a moon deity. The four wives of Jacob show that he also is the same. His twelve sons are the twelve months. Leah's seven sons are the gods of the week. The twelve hundred pieces of silver which Benjamin received represent a multiple of the thirty

days of the month; and the five changes of garments which he received are the five intercalary days of the Babylonian year.

In Joseph, Winckler sees a Tammuz, or sun-myth. His dream shows the priority of the sun. Esau identified with Edom is the same, as is shown by his 'redness.' The stories of Moses, Joshua (who is another form of Moses), Ehud, Gideon, are sun-myths. In David, Winckler finds more evidence of a solar origin than in all other Biblical characters. Solomon and others are explained as having the same origin. The recurrence of characteristic numbers is the chief criterion by which these supposed facts are determined.¹

It seems passing strange that such reputed German scholars as Winckler, Zimmern, Jeremias, and Jensen should risk their reputation by attaching their names to such far-fetched and groundless interpretations as these, but so it is. Such are the methods employed by some writers in their attempt to discredit the Bible. But does archeology furnish any testimony to establish the fact that the patriarchs were historical persons? After a rather extended discussion of this question the same writer comes to this conclusion:

The inscriptions and archeological finds of contemporaneous peoples have corroborated in a remarkable manner the early history in the Old Testament of the nations of antiquity, while at the same time they have restored the historical background and an atmosphere for the patriarchal period, so that even a scientist can feel that the old Book has preserved not only trustworthy traditions to be used in the reconstruction of the history of that period, but also the knowledge of veritable personages in the patriarchs. Nothing has been produced to show that they are not historical; and on the other hand every increase of knowledge, gained by the spade or by the skill of the decipherer, helps to dissolve the conclusions of those who have relegated the patriarchs to the region of myth.²

Abram is not a name invented by the so-called mythical writers of the stories compiled to form the Old Testament. It did not originate in the unreal residences of the deities of fable and folk-lore, but is of decidedly earthly origin. Here are the facts:

Abu-ramu or Abram, 'the exalted father,' Abraham's original name, is a name which also occurs on early Babylonian Contract-tablets. Sarah, again, is the Assyrian sarrat, 'queen,' while Milcah, the daughter

¹ *Amurru, the Home of the Northern Semites*, pp. 16, 17. By Albert T. Clay. The Sunday School Times Company.

² *Id.*, pp., 85, 86.

of Haran, is the Assyrian milcat, 'princess.' The site of Ur of the Chaldees, the birthplace of Abram, has been discovered, and excavations have been made among the ruins of its temples. The site is now called Mugheir, and lies on the western side of the Euphrates, on the border of the desert, immediately to the west of Erech. The chief temple of Ur was dedicated to the moon-god, and the Accadian inscriptions on its bricks, which record its foundation, are among the earliest that we possess. It was, in fact, the capital of one of the oldest pre-Semitic dynasties, and its very name, Uru or Ur, is only the Semitic form of the Accadian eri, 'city.' It is probable that it had passed into the hands of the Semitic 'Casdim' before the age of Abraham; at all events, it had long been the resort of Semitic traders, who had ceased to lead the roving life of their ancestors in the Arabian desert. From Ur, Abraham's father had migrated to Haran, in the northern part of Mesopotamia, on the high road which led from Babylonia and Assyria into Syria and Palestine. Why he should have migrated to so distant a city has been a great puzzle, and has tempted scholars to place both Ur and Haran in wrong localities; but here, again, the cuneiform inscriptions have at last furnished us with the key. As far back as the Accadian epoch, the district in which Haran was built belonged to the rulers of Babylonia; Haran was, in fact, the frontier town of the empire, commanding at once the highway into the west and the fords of the Euphrates; the name itself was an Accadian one signifying 'the road'; and the deity to whom it was dedicated was the moon-god of Ur. The symbol of this deity was a conical stone, with a star above it, and gems with this symbol engraved upon them may be seen in the British Museum.³

With regard to Haran, it is very probable that this ancient city was, by turns, under the rule either of Babylonia or Assyria until the absorption of the former power into the great Persian Empire, when Haran likewise, in all probability, shared the same fate. Concerning the early history of the city very little is known, but it is not improbable that it was an ancient Babylonian foundation, the name being apparently the Babylonian word *Harranu*, meaning 'road.' The name given to this 'road-city' is explained as originating in the fact that it lay at the junction of several trade-routes,—an explanation which is very probable.

The city itself was, at the time of its greatest prosperity, a considerable place, as the remains now existing show. There are the ruins of a castle, with square columns 8 feet thick, supporting a roof of 30 feet high, together with some comparatively modern ruins. The ancient walls, though in a very dilapidated state, are said to be continuous throughout. No houses remain, but there are several ruins, one of great interest, and considerable extent, which Ainsworth considered to be a temple. A rudely sculptured lion, found outside the walls, is regarded

³ *Fresh Light From the Ancient Monuments*, pp. 44, 45. By A. H. Sayce. Fleming H. Revell Company.

as giving evidence of Assyrian occupation, which, however, is otherwise known to have been an historical fact.⁴

The evidence as to the historicity of the patriarch Abraham is now so convincing that only the extreme radical critics attempt to deny him his place in history. Here is a further interesting testimony concerning this father of many nations:

According to the most trustworthy traditions, therefore, as well as from the Bible itself, Abraham was of Chaldean or Babylonian origin. If the city of Urie or Ur be, as he says, that which was also called Camarina, this would in all probability be the Aramean form of the Arabic *qamar*, 'the moon,' and the name Camarina would be due to the fact that the Moon-god Sin, or Nannara, was worshipped there. It is also noteworthy that the city whither the family of Terah emigrated, Haran (in Assyro-Babylonian, Harran), was likewise a center of lunar worship, and some have sought to see in that a reason for choosing that settlement. In connection with this it may be remarked, that in the Talmud Terah, the father of Abraham, is represented as an idolater, reproved by his son Abraham for foolish and wicked superstition.⁵

The uncovering of ancient history has provided an interesting background for the Scripture narrative, a background which testifies to the trustworthiness of the Bible writers. Thus we read the experiences of Abraham in a new light:

The first pilgrim father of the faith, called of God and sent upon a great mission, stands and will ever stand, one of the most striking and inspiring figures in all history; but the pathos of emigration to a strange land which has enveloped the story has almost wholly evaporated.

Palestine in the days of Abraham was a part of the Babylonian empire. The familiar Hammurabi laws, though not codified until after Abraham's emigration, threw about Abraham their protection in the West as in the East. 'Abram the Hebrew' came into a land in which, of all places on earth, the Hebrew tongue was at home. If semi-nomadic life was quite in vogue in the land of the Amorite, it was no strange state or novel experience for Abraham, for he only lived *there* the life he *brought with him*. He came not as a lone emigrant to a Bedouin experience, but moved about as a Bedouin prince, and, on occasion, put three hundred and eighteen men of his 'trained servants, born in his own house,' into the field armed for battle, if battle there should be. Such was the life of the day in the West land of the Great Sea. Then the method of writing and the literary language of the land were the

⁴ *The Old Testament*, pp. 199, 200. By Theophilus G. Pinches. The Macmillan Company.

⁵ *Id.*, p. 147.

Babylonian script and the Babylonian tongue. And though the sovereignty of Babylonia was somewhat uncertain and insecure at the time, the jealous enemies on the southwest, the Hyksos dynasty of Egypt, were themselves 'Bedouin princes' who were ready to accord to Abraham a royal welcome, and a safe retreat from famine.

Thus the pathetic picture of a pioneer career in a dangerous land has grown dim and dimmer until at last it has faded out completely in the ever-increasing light of contemporary history brought by Babylonian and Palestinian and Egyptian discoveries. At the same time, Abraham, the pilgrim father of the faith, has loomed greater and greater.⁶

There is another interesting item furnished by archeology which confirms in a clear way the reliability of the Scripture record concerning Abraham. The Bible states that he migrated to a land which is called Canaan. Was such a country known to the people of the time of Abraham? Archeology furnishes the answer:

It is noteworthy, that the country to which Abraham migrated, and which is called by the Hebrew writers Canaan, is called by the same name in the Tel-el-Amarna letters, and the fact that the Babylonian king Burraurias uses the same term shows that it was the usual name in that part of the world. Among the Babylonians, however, it was called *mât Amurri*, 'the land of Amorita,' the common expression, among the Babylonians and Assyrians, for 'the West.' In later times the Assyrians designated this district *mât Hatti*, 'the land of Heth,' the home of the Hittites. The inference from this naturally is, that at the time when the Babylonians became acquainted with the country, the Amorites were the most powerful nationality there, whilst the Hittites had the dominion, and were in greater force later on, when the Assyrians first traded or warred there. These two linguistic usages show that the two great races in the country, both of them Hamitic, according to Gen. 10: 15, 16, were the Amorites (who spread as far as Babylonia, and even had settlements there), and the Hittites, known from other sources to have extended their empire far into the north among the Cappadocians, and the south as far as Carchemish and Hamath.

In addition to the above indications from the historical inscriptions of Assyria, and the contract-tablets of Babylonia, belonging to the first dynasty of Babylon, . . . we have also the indications furnished by the bilingual geographical lists.⁷

Another writer of recognized authority deals with this matter at some length, and a portion of his testimony is here given:

⁶ *The Deciding Voice of the Monuments in Biblical Criticism*, pp. 76, 77. By Melvin Grove Kyle. The Bibliotheca Sacra Company.

⁷ *The Old Testament*, p. 205. By Theophilus G. Pinches. The Macmillan Company.

Archeology throws new and valuable light upon the patriarchal age. The patriarchs themselves, whom it was proposed to resolve into tribal personifications, are found to bear personal names with which their age was perfectly familiar. A name Abe-ramu, almost the same as Abraham, occurs on a contract-tablet of the second reign before Hammurabi. Other contract-tablets of that age exhibit the names Jacob and Jacob-el. The names Jacob-el, and Joseph-el appear on a monument of Thothmes III of Egypt (about 1500 B. C.) as place-names in Palestine. In other ways the whole period has been lifted up into new and commanding importance. It is generally accepted that the Hammurabi of the inscriptions is none other than the Amraphel of Gen. 14:1; and the discovery of the Code of this able ruler has given his name an *éclat* it can never again lose. The discovery was made at Susa in January, 1902, and the Code itself, the most complete and finished of any in antiquity, shows the height of civilization to which the Babylonia of Abraham's day had attained.⁸

Similar extracts from other archeological writers might be produced, but it is not necessary in order to prove that Abraham was a real person. It may be worth while, however, to present one more statement:

The name of the patriarch, moreover, seems to betray the place of his origin, the first name that he bore was Abram, which has already been compared with the Abu-ramu, 'honored father,' of the Assyrian eponym-lists (in this place an official by whose name the year 677, the 5th year of Esarhaddon, was distinguished). At an earlier date than this, however, the name or a similar name occurs on a contract-tablet of the reign of Abil-Sin, the fourth king of the dynasty of Babylon (about 1950 B. C.), under the form of Abê-ramu—not quite the same, but very near. The person bearing this name was father of a certain Sa-Amurri, '(the man) of the Amorite god,' a name testifying to the fact already revealed to us historically, namely, that at this time intercourse between the people of the Euphrates valley, including Babylonia, and the shores of the western sea was very common, and emigration and immigration on both sides took place.

When, however, it was revealed to Abram that he was to stay in the Promised Land, a change was made in his name—he was no longer known by the Assyro-Babylonian name Abram, 'honored father,' but, in view of the destiny appointed for him, he was to be called Abraham, 'father of a multitude of nations.'

The first stratum of the Hebrew nation was, therefore, to all appearance Babylonian, the second stratum Aramean, probably a kindred stock, whilst the third was to all appearance Canaanitish. All these must have left their trace on the Hebrew character, and, like most

⁸ *The Problem of the Old Testament*, pp. 409, 410. By James Orr. Chas. Scribner's Sons.

mixed races, they showed at all times superior intelligence in many ways.⁹

During the years 1926-30 excavations were carried on at Tell Beit Mirsim, now identified with the Biblical Kirjath-sepher, the "house of books." Some of the results of this work were reported by Prof. Melvin Grove Kyle. Although this town is not mentioned in the Bible until the time of Joshua, yet one of the discoveries made throws an interesting light upon the time of Abraham. The facts are thus stated:

Another illustration of historical parallels of far more important significance appeared in the debris of the earlier Middle Bronze ruins at Kirjath-sepher. It strangely links up with the story of Lot and the angels. Those messengers of warning suggested that they remain in the street of Sodom all night. Lot knew too well the men of Sodom and so insisted that the angels come into his house. They did so. The lascivious mob tried to follow. They battered at the door, but the door *was mob proof*. These brief details yet reveal much concerning political and sociological conditions at Sodom in that age. Police protection was very poor and house construction was planned accordingly. Now, at Kirjath-sepher in contemporaneous times we found a great courtyard, as of a caravansary, with brazier for cooking and a place for the feeding of horses. Some chicken-peas well roasted were found in the brazier, food cooked nearly four thousand years ago! This house had strong walls and a great door, the very large door-socket of which was still *in situ*. So exactly did it conform to the conditions called for by the story of Lot and the angels, that the Staff immediately dubbed this 'the Abrahamic house.' The same condition prevailed in Early Iron I, the time of the Judges. At Gibeah of Benjamin, the mob was also foiled by a mob-proof door. The two instances only become significant when we note the strikingly different conditions revealed in the city of Early Iron II, the city of the kings of Judah from Rheoboam down over the ninth, eighth and seventh centuries to the destruction by Nebuchadnezzar. Here many houses and scores of doorways were found, but a door-socket was almost unknown; the people used only archways or curtains. Blessed are the people of today who have such protection from thieves and mobs that they may build their houses thus and live, as it were, in the open! Now how would anyone writing in the 8th or 7th century under such sociological and political conditions describe, or know to attribute to, the days of Abraham and Lot such conditions as are reflected in the story of Lot and the angels? Was he an eminent archeologist, who, while the Plain of Sodom was still uninhabited yet dug up that ancient

⁹ *The Old Testament*, pp. 148, 149. By Theophilus G. Pinches. The Macmillan Company.

civilization and so exactly described the condition that prevailed at that time that the description exactly conforms to the facts as found in the great court at Kirjath-sepher? If there were no Italian or Spanish records, could anyone now five hundred years after the days of Columbus write an accurate account of the events of his time! It would seem that the Abraham story must in some ways have been documented, from the time of the events, either in writing or orally, as in the case of the poems of Homer and the Rig Veda.¹⁰

The recent archeological discoveries in Egypt have corroborated in a marked manner the patriarchal history preserved in the Scriptures. This is acknowledged on all sides. Here is a very recent statement:

Ten years ago, Egyptian history, properly speaking, began with Snofru and the pyramid builders. Menes and the kings of the first three dynasties were regarded as legendary and mythological figures. All this has now been changed. The myths of Egypt and of the Homeric poems, as well as the folk-tales of Greece and Rome dealing with ancient heroes, have, by discoveries in Egypt, Cyprus, Mycenæ, and Crete, been found to rest upon a historical basis, and it seems safe to predict that within the next ten years new discoveries in Palestine will dispel the last doubt concerning the Biblical patriarchs, whom a deceptive criticism of the past forty years has attempted to relegate to the shadows of myth and legend.¹¹

It is now steadily growing more difficult for the radical critics to maintain their destructive theories. The number of witnesses from the ruins of ancient cities is constantly increasing to confirm the Scripture records, and to testify as to the time when these records were written. The modernistic claim that all history down to the time of David is wholly mythical has been dealt many a staggering blow, and even some of the critics have been compelled to revise their former assertions. There is no possible excuse for infidelity in these days of increasing light.

¹⁰ *The Evangelical Quarterly*, Oct., 1930. James Clarke & Co., Ltd., 9 Essex Street, Strand, London.

¹¹ *Researches in Biblical Archæology*, p. 255. By Olaf A. Toffteen. Reprinted by permission of the University of Chicago Press.

XI

JACOB AND JOSEPH AT SHECHEM

While Egyptian discoveries have supplied us with information regarding Palestine, which is nowhere found in Scripture, they have been the means also of confirming in many ways the historical accuracy of the Old Testament, and done a valuable work of elucidation as well.

—J. GARROW DUNCAN.

FROM earliest childhood we have heard the name of the patriarch Jacob. We have watched him as he went through that tragic struggle, wrestling with the angel by the ford of the Jabbok, and have marked the significance of his new name Israel given to him because he had striven with God, and with men, and had prevailed. The thought never occurred to us that in a future riot of skepticism this honored patriarch would be refused a place in real life, and would be transferred to the realm of mythical heroes of paganism. But we have come to the time when the wrecking of confidence in all the well-established beliefs of earlier days has become the pastime with the advocates of a new religion, whose motto seems to be "Down with apostolic Christianity."

According to one of the late interpretations of the Bible story Jacob is a moon deity, and his twelve sons are representations of the twelve months of the year. This extreme example of mythical speculation seems to feed that pride of intellect which places more dependence upon human reason than upon divine inspiration. But while some living beings have been emphatic in their denial of the authority of the word of God, the dead things of ancient times have appeared on the scene, and by their indisputable testimony have rescued Jacob from the den of the critical lions, and have re-established his full right to be regarded as an actual person of history. Again it appears that "A single archeological discovery has upset mountains of learned discussion, of ingenious theory and skeptical demonstration."

When our Lord was traveling through Samaria "he cometh to a city of Samaria, called Sychar, near to the parcel of ground

that Jacob gave to his son Joseph: and Jacob's well was there." According to the Mosaic document this "parcel of ground" must have been near Shechem, for we read: "And Jacob came in peace to the city of Shechem, which is in the land of Canaan, when he came from Paddan-aram; and encamped before the city. And he bought the parcel of ground, where he had spread his tent, at the hand of the children of Hamor, Shechem's father, for a hundred pieces of money." We are then justified in concluding that there was a well near Shechem which was known as Jacob's well. Has archeology furnished any evidence which confirms this conclusion?

During recent years excavations have been made upon the site of the ancient city of Shechem which have added "additional and indubitable proofs of the identity and antiquity of the mighty mass which so long has escaped the attention of historians and archeologists. The results continue to bear testimony to the Scriptural claims made for the residence here of both Abraham and Jacob." "The recognized importance of Shechem had caused Abraham to make it his first stopping place in Canaan, when coming out of Haran. In the time of both Abraham and Jacob it was the capital of whatever government or influence related the Amorite people of the west land in a unity of ideal or effort." One explorer who "undertook, in 1926, a personal survey of the probable boundaries of Jacob's land portion at Shechem," reports that "taking the reputed tomb of Joseph, or even the verified site of Jacob's well, as a landmark, this freehold stretched from near the walls of Shechem for a distance of one and one-half miles along the eastern face of Gerizim, and embraced indeterminate portions of the underlying valley." This mention of Gerizim reminds us that after Joshua had led the children of Israel into the promised land, while half of them were "in front of Mount Gerizim, and half of them in front of Mount Ebal," he afterward "read all the words of the law, the blessing and the curse, according to all that is written in the book of the law." This then is a historic locality.

The work of the excavators at Shechem has been abundantly rewarded, as is shown by a portion of a report made by one who was personally acquainted with the facts:

The results of the excavations at Shechem have set the personality

and movements of Jacob in the clear light of historicity, and have related the details of his migration (shall I say, invasion?) story into a close and logical unity.

The excavations at Shechem . . . have developed the fact that the curb of the well of Jacob, the most thoroughly identified Old Testament landmark in Palestine, is on the geological level of the recently uncovered gate of the tower of Shechem (Judges 9: 46), the fundamentals of which served each successive occupation down to the time of the Greek emperors. Over the existing pavement stones of this tower passed the feet of Abraham and Jacob. The pottery test fixes the date within safe figures. The curbstone of Jacob's well lies below the surface of three to four meters of temporal accretions, and on the primitive rock surface. That the present curbstone is the original construction, there can be no doubt. It was designed by its builder to outlast the ages, and thereby to become a symbol of the eternity of his conquest. The gate of the tower of Shechem, dating probably from an early secondary stage of the city's history (approximately 2000-2300 B. C.) rests on the same geological surface as does the well curb. By every token the latter antedates the first half of the eighteenth century B. C., while the former goes three to four centuries further back, possibly to 2100 B. C.

The very ancient Canaanitish palace uncovered, along with the gate and defence walls, show signs of having been plundered and simultaneously destroyed. The adjacent pottery indicates a date coincident with the taking and sacking of the city by the sons of Jacob. But the city was almost immediately rebuilt, and that by its former Amorite inhabitants, or such as survived. Between the two stages of building there is no trace of foreign intrusion or influence. This agrees with the Genesis record that Jacob and his sons, almost immediately after the taking of the city, removed to Bethel, and that through fear of reprisal on the part of an Amorite confederacy.

This, so far as its ruins have been made to speak, is the testimony of Shechem to the historicity of Jacob; but the uncovering of Shechem is an unfinished task. About five-sevenths of the *tell* remains to be excavated; and this area includes the ancient necropolis, the most promising and wonder-inspiring heap in Palestine.¹

Either a lack of intimate knowledge of the history of the time, or a settled determination to discredit the Scriptures, has led a certain school of critics to find a variety of alleged contradictions in the Biblical account of some events. A case in point is the purchase of land made at Shechem by Abraham and Jacob. This is satisfactorily dealt with by the same writer:

But the objection is urged that Abraham is represented as purchasing this sepulcher from 'Hamor, the father of Shechem'; while Jacob, one

¹ Bishop H. M. DuBose, in *The Biblical Review*, Oct., 1928.

hundred and seventy-five years later, is declared to have acquired 'a parcel of a field' in Shechem from 'Hamor, Shechem's father.' Critics have generally considered the two statements on their face to be contradictory; but they are not; rather they are confirmatory. 'Hamor,' which means a 'he ass,' and, hence, 'the chief burden bearer,' was evidently the title of the patriarch, or ruler, of Shechem, just as 'Pharaoh' was the title of the king of Egypt, while 'Shechem' was the common designation of the heir apparent of the ruling house, as the eldest son of the English royal house is known as the Prince of Wales. That there should have been a 'Hamor' in the time of Abraham and another in the time of Jacob offers no more difficulty than that there was a 'Pharaoh' in the time of Abraham and another in the time of his grandson. Five hundred and thirty years later, in the Israelitish era, the Israelitish patriarch or elder, of Shechem was referred to as 'Hamor, the father of Shechem' (Judges 9: 28).²

A certain class of mortal men do not hesitate to sit upon the judgment seat and condemn the word of the immortal God as being inconsistent with itself. In view of this exhibition of pride of intellect we must let Jehovah make His own protest: "Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge? Gird up now thy loins like a man; for I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me. Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? Declare, if thou hast understanding." And there was none that answered, no, not a word.

The Biblical story of Joseph is unique and interesting. A favorite son is sold into slavery by his envious brothers, he is imprisoned under a false charge, he is called before Pharaoh on the testimony of a fellow-prisoner whose dream he had correctly interpreted, he interprets Pharaoh's dreams, and is by him elevated to a high position of authority in the Egyptian government. With full faith in the divine promise made to his great-grandfather, Abraham, concerning the land of Canaan, he said to his brethren, just before his death: "I die; but God will surely visit you, and bring you up out of this land unto the land which he sware to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob." Evidently desiring that his bones should finally rest in the family lot at Shechem, he further declared: "Ye shall carry up my bones from hence."

Having in mind the modern effort to resolve these patriarchs into mythical representations, it is assuring to read of the result of recent investigations:

² *Id.*

The absolutely accurate reflection in the story of Joseph of the Egypt of Joseph's day, as revealed by the many discoveries of which people 700-800 years later could not know, mark the theory of the reflection of tribal history and characteristics as pure speculation.³

But what about Joseph's coat of many colors? Was it the mythical dress of a colorful story? or is it a reflection of a real custom? Here is a brief answer:

The appearance of such a coat a little earlier in the decoration of the tombs of Benihasan among Palestinian ambassadors to Egypt, probably indicates that this garment was in some sense ceremonial, a token of rank.⁴

This is one of the many incidental testimonies to the historical accuracy of the Biblical record. Taken alone it might not be absolutely convincing, but when joined with the constantly increasing list of others of a similar nature, it contributes its share to a well-grounded conclusion that the Biblical writers dealt with facts rather than fantastic fancies.

When the children of Israel left Egypt, the instruction given by Joseph was not forgotten, and "Moses took the bones of Joseph with him." During the many years of wandering this remarkable reminder of the promise of God was never left behind, and after the wanderers were settled in their promised inheritance, they justified the faith of Joseph, for we read: "And the bones of Joseph, which the children of Israel brought up out of Egypt, buried they in Shechem, in the parcel of ground which Jacob bought of the sons of Hamor, the father of Shechem, for a hundred pieces of money: and they became the inheritance of the children of Joseph" (Josh. 24: 32). Shechem has been found by the explorers, and partially uncovered. The location of the ancient cemetery has been determined. It is entirely within the bounds of possibility that the very bones of the patriarchs may greet the eyes and thrill the hearts of other archeologists, if this historic burying ground should be entered.

In the whole pilgrimage story from Abram to Joseph, Shechem holds the central place. "Shechem assumes significance therefore as Abram's first notable stopping place in Canaan, where the

³ Melvin Grove Kyle in *The International Standard Bible Encyclopædia*, p. 1737.

⁴ *Id.*, p. 1738.

promise made at the oak was confirmed by the altar of worship. God's man in God's country raised an altar at Shechem as a witness to this graciously established covenant, when the polytheistic Canaanite still walked abroad in the land." Later came the long sojourning in Egypt, followed by the deliverance, the wilderness wandering, and finally the entrance into Canaan, followed by the burial of the bones of Joseph at Shechem. But what is the special significance of all this experience? It has been clearly set forth:

Joseph's faith triumphed. His bones were buried in the parcel of ground now made sacred by holy associations: the original promise to Abraham and his seed, made under the oak and confirmed by the altar of worship; the re-dedication of Jacob and his family, signalized by the burial of the foreign gods and idolatrous trinkets under the oak; the well from which Joseph's brethren had departed for Dothan, after which they sold him into Egypt; the scene of the blessings and cursings before the peaks of Gerizim and Ebal upon entrance into the land; and the great memorial stone set up there under the oak by the sanctuary, as a perpetual witness to the faithfulness of God and a reminder to the covenanted people of their vows.

Today one can board a railroad train at Cairo, Egypt, near the former land of Goshen, and be in Shechem (the modern Nablus) tomorrow. 'Today Shechem is the seat of the government of the province, and—eloquent homage of civilization to its immemorial rank—it is the connecting link of the telegraphic systems of the east and west of Jordan.' Had Joseph died yesterday in Egypt, he could be buried tomorrow in Shechem. We attempt in moments and days what the Almighty works out in decades and centuries. History is His story. He accomplishes His all-wise purposes, if not in one generation, then in another. The eternal years are His.⁵

Just as truly as Shechem was a historical town, as the excavators have proven, so truly were the persons who lived in Shechem historical persons, and not mythical tribal representations. And this ancient town has now risen up after the lapse of long centuries to confirm the faithfulness of God and the reliability of His Book. Our God established His covenant of old, and He is a covenant-keeping God. Jacob and Joseph at Shechem are witnesses.

⁵ Howard Tillman Kuist in *The Biblical Review*, July, 1926.

XII

FROM EGYPT TO KADESH-BARNEA

It is a striking fact that the Bible stands in contrast to all other sacred books of the religions of the world in being rooted and grounded in actual history. As Dr. William T. Ellis has shown, it is preëminently a "place book." That is, its geography is definite and accurate, and as knowledge of ancient lands and ancient history increases through the discoveries of archeology the Bible is seen to be a true record at every point.

—ROBERT C. MCQUILKIN. The Sunday School Times.

THERE are several well-known routes across the United States, and the varied attractions of the different roads are fully set forth by their representatives; but if one has important business in California, the matter of prime importance is not the route, not the scenery, but the arrival. If an intimate friend visits you from Europe, you do not ask him to draw a map indicating the exact path of his ship across the ocean, and probably he would not be able to do so, even if he should try. The special point of interest is the fact that he has arrived, and when this has been satisfactorily settled, it is not absolutely necessary to trace his course. That is of secondary interest.

So it is with the Exodus of the children out of Egypt. The important question is, Were the promises of God fulfilled, and were they therefore delivered from the power of the Pharaoh and brought into the promised land? That they escaped from Egypt and were later settled in Palestine is established by indisputable proof; and while the route is certainly a matter of real interest, and has been given much serious study, yet it is not necessary to establish every detail of it in order to be sure that God acted upon His promise to Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, and gave them the promised land.

Furthermore, while the route of the exodus is described with sufficient clearness in the Bible, and it is not necessary to establish any particular route by extraneous proof in order to prove that the Bible is trustworthy, at the same time it is both interesting and also a confirmation of our faith to note how the geography of the country, the habits and customs of the different

peoples, and the archeological evidence made available in the last fifty years harmonize with the Scriptural record. Much time, money, and effort have been expended within the memory of many now living in careful surveys of the geography of the different countries involved, and in digging up the ruins of many towns and cities found therein, in search of reliable testimony to show that the Israelites did actually leave Egypt and make their journey by one of the well-known routes to Palestine. Some of the results of all this investigation will be presented later.

Consider, now, the main facts. A nation of slaves is miraculously and suddenly set free. They are entirely without national organization. With two men as their outstanding leaders they leave their country, men, women and children, with flocks, herds and such personal belongings as they could gather up in haste. They start out by a way which they have not known. They continue their journeyings through strange and often forbidding surroundings, through lands where according to any human outlook they would soon perish for lack of food and water.

*They wandered in the wilderness in a desert way;
They found no city of habitation.
Hungry and thirsty,
Their soul fainted in them.*

*Then they cried unto Jehovah in their trouble,
And He delivered them out of their distresses.
He led them also by a straight way,
That they might go to a city of habitation.*

And so they journeyed; and so they came to Sinai; ("It is exceedingly significant that the description of the route of the exodus is still the best guide-book for the route from Suez to Mount Sinai."—Kyle.) and so they continued their march of eleven days to Kadesh-Barnea; and here they so rebelled against Jehovah that they were sentenced to remain in the wilderness country until the fathers and mothers died there and the children grew up to take their places; then by easy stages they moved on east of the Dead Sea and round to the Jordan, which opened before them, and they finally passed into the land of promise. Forty years with no permanent home! Forty years of alternating hope and fear! Forty years during which a new generation

grew up! Forty years ending in a notable triumph and a vindication of God as a covenant-keeping God. Such are the facts.

A few names, marking some of the most important stations on the route of the exodus, are quite familiar to all readers of the Scriptures. Among these are Pi-hahiroth and Baal-zephon, near which they encamped just before crossing the Red Sea; Mount Horeb, where they received the law and were instructed concerning the forms of worship connected with the sanctuary; Kadesh-Barnea, where they abode many days; and Shittim, the last camping-ground of Israel before they crossed the Jordan, where "Israel joined himself unto Baal-peor," and suffered the serious consequences of this apostasy. A location has been discovered and vigorously defended for each one of these places, while at the same time apparently plausible objections have been made to all or nearly all of them. One investigator, who made a personal study of the territory involved, came to decided conclusions concerning the first stages of Israel's journey, some of which are stated in these paragraphs:

There are three great highways out of Egypt eastward. They are mentioned in the Bible text by their former well-known descriptive titles; the Road of the Land of the Philistines, the Road of the Wall, and the Road of the Red Sea, or the Road of the Wilderness of the Red Sea. These three roads are clearly referred to in the Egyptian monumental records. The face of the country on the eastern borders of Lower Egypt, and beyond, shows where must have been the course of these roads; and it still gives traces of them severally. The sure location of these roads, respectively, fixes important points in the route of the exodus. . . .

The northernmost stretch of the western arm of the Red Sea was then practically at the present head of the Gulf of Suez. Whatever difference existed must have been a slight one. Hence the last camping-field of the Israelites must have been near the northern shore of the Gulf of Suez, as being near the exit, through the Great Wall, of the Red Sea Road (which corresponded with the modern Hajj route into and over the Red Sea desert). The crossing of the Red Sea must have been from that starting-point.¹

An attempt has been made by some critics to belittle or discard the idea of the supernatural in connection with the crossing of the Red Sea. This has been done by finding a place where a strong wind has been known to drive the water back so as to

¹ *Kadesh-Barnea*, pp. 429-431. By H. Clay Trumbull. Chas. Scribner's Sons.

make a crossing on foot possible, and then claiming that this must have been the point where the Israelites crossed. But it involves a greater strain upon credulity to accept this explanation than it does to believe that there was a special intervention. An ordinary wind of unusual strength does not blow in just the right direction and at just the right time in order to save an unarmed people from their foe, neither does it reverse itself at just the right time to destroy that pursuing foe. We must beg to be excused from violating our common sense by consenting to any such fantastic effort to shut out the active will of God from this experience. It is not difficult to believe God when we really know Him.

From Mount Horeb the Israelites proceeded to Kadesh-Barnea, a journey of eleven days. The distance is 115 to 120 miles, and this harmonizes with the time statement, as a caravan made up as Israel's was, is found to travel eleven or twelve miles per day over that same territory. The importance of Kadesh-Barnea, or Kadesh, has been fully recognized. "With the exception of Horeb, no place between the passage of the Red Sea and the passage of the Jordan concentrates so much interest as Kadesh." (Durbin.) "The key to the whole geography is the site of Kadesh." (Milman.) "This is perhaps the most important site in the whole region, as it forms the key to the movements of the children of Israel during their forty years' wandering." (Palmer.) "To determine the position of Kadesh itself, is the great problem of the whole route." (William Smith.) The view expressed by these well-known authorities on Bible questions is well sustained by the prominence given to this city (it is "the one place spoken of as 'a city' in all the Israelitish encampments") in the writings of Moses. Note the number of the references, and the significance of these texts:

It was an important camp of the Israelites during their wanderings, and seems to have been their headquarters for 38 years (Deut. 1: 2; 2: 14; Jth. 5: 14). There the returning spies found the camp (Num. 13: 26); there Miriam died and was buried (Num. 20: 1); from thence messengers were sent to the king of Edom (Num. 20: 14; Jdgs. 11: 16ff.). There the people rebelled because of the want of water, and Moses brought water from the rock (Num. 20: 2ff.); it was called therefore Meribath—or Meriboth-Kadesh (Num. 27: 14; Ezek. 47: 10; 48: 28). It was situated in the wilderness of Zin (Num. 20: 1; 33: 36, 37) in the hill country of the Amorites (Deut. 1: 19) 11 days' jour-

ney from Horeb, by the way of Mount Seir (Deut. 1: 2), 'in the uttermost' of the border of Edom (Num. 20: 16), and on the southern border, probably the S. E. corner, of Judah (Ezek. 47: 19; cf. Jth. 1: 9).²

Some may wonder how it happened that a city so prominent in the Biblical history of the time of Moses should have disappeared so completely and have remained hidden for so long a period. This matter is discussed in an interesting paragraph which is here reproduced:

Kadesh-Barnea—Why it Was Lost; How it Was Found. It seems incredible that one of the most sacred religious and historical sites of the ancient world should be practically lost to civilized man for nearly a thousand years and all the more incredible since in all the ten thousand square miles of the Sinaitic Peninsula only three or four other oases comparable to this in beauty and in the abundance of water are to be found. But the incredibility begins to disappear when we remember that even in the ancient time this was called Kades, 'the Holy' and up to the present moment the spring is called the 'Holy Fountain' by the population who wander about it. For any one of the Bedouin of any tribe to show these sacred springs to an 'unbeliever' would be an act of impiety and of disloyalty to his race. His superstition also protects his piety in this case, for all Christians are thought to be magicians and to possess incantations which affect the rainfall, so that showing this spring to a Christian or even mentioning it by its right name might tend to dry it up.³

Many attempts have been made to determine authoritatively the location of this key city, and no less than eighteen different sites have been proposed. It is not necessary even to list the strange sounding names borne by these different sites, much less is it necessary to give the reasons advanced in their favor. Of course there was only one Kadesh, not eighteen, and no amount of exploration can prove to the contrary. I do not pretend to possess the critical judgment required to determine which is the real Kadesh, but I will briefly present the conclusion of a scholar who gave long and careful study to this question, who personally investigated upon the ground the claims for different locations, and whose decision has received the assent of other investigators. This investigator is H. Clay Trumbull, remembered by many as

² S. F. Hunter in *The International Standard Bible Encyclopædia*, pp. 1788, 1789.

³ *Recent Explorations in Palestine*, pp. 103, 104. By Camden M. Cobern. Funk and Wagnalls Company.

the editor of *The Sunday School Times* until his death, whose book, *Kadesh-Barnea*, containing nearly five hundred pages, has commanded wide-spread and favorable attention. After a prolonged discussion of various routes of the exodus and of the many locations proposed for Kadesh-Barnea, Dr. Trumbull declares:

Kadesh-Barnea is to be recognized, either in or near 'Arabah (the great natural depression between the eastern arm of the Red Sea and the southern end of the Dead Sea); or on or near the plateau of the Desert et-Teeh, more than a thousand feet above the level of the 'Arabah. The approach of the Israelites to Canaan must have been by the one direction or the other; by the lower 'Arabah, or by the upper desert; and Kadesh-Barnea must have been at the northern extremity of the route thus taken.

'Ayn el-Waybeh is in the 'Arabah, near its upper end. 'Ayn Qadees is on the level of the upper desert, at a point northward of the desert proper; but not within the commonly supposed boundaries of Canaan. These two sites are, therefore, representative sites; and it is not to be wondered at that they have been so accepted and discussed.⁴

The author then considers quite fully the arguments for and against the claim that 'Ayn el-Waybeh is the true location of Kadesh-Barnea, and also the objections raised against the claim that 'Ayn Qadees is the true location, and then gives the reasons for his own conclusion in favor of 'Ayn Qadees:

1. The region of 'Ayn Qadees is a strategic stronghold on the southern border of Canaan; immediately accessible from the main road out of the southern desert, Canaanward, yet secluded from it. It is near the trunk-connection of the principal roads into Canaan, at a point convenient for watching or seizing those roads; and it has an inner road northward separate from those roads, and easily held by itself at its single mountain pass.

2. 'Ayn Qadees, with its adjoining plain, is the southernmost and central point of the obvious natural boundary line along the southern border of Canaan, from the lower end of the Dead Sea to the outgoings of Wady el 'Areesh into the Mediterranean.

3. Accepting 'Ayn Qadees as the site of Kadesh-Barnea, secures, also, the identification of every other landmark, in its order, along the southern boundary line of Canaan, according to the Bible text.

4. To identify Kadesh-Barnea at 'Ayn Qadees, is to render clear the movements of the Israelites toward, and away from, the southern border of Canaan; as no other identification of this site has done.

5. The features and the name 'Ayn Qadees correspond with the

⁴ *Kadesh-Barnea*, p. 304. By H. Clay Trumbull. Chas. Scribner's Sons.

Bible references to Kadesh-Barnea; as is the case with no other site proposed.⁵

After devoting more than sixty pages to the consideration of this important subject, in which he gives due study both to the definite statements in the Mosaic record and to the geography of the country involved, Dr. Trumbull presents what he regards as "fair conclusions":

1. The site of Kadesh-Barnea seems identified at 'Ayn Qadees. Every requirement of the Bible narrative, and every condition insisted on by the critics as essential to the identification, are met in this place. Every objection, also, that has been raised against the identification, is found to have no force in the light of close examination.

2. This identification, with its linkings, necessitates the reshaping of much of the geography of the southern border of Palestine and the neighboring regions, as indicated in the maps, cyclopedias, commentaries, and guide-books, now in common use. . . .

3. It is clearer than ever that many of the supposed confusions of geographical data in the Pentateuch are the results of later error concerning the region in question. And there is even stronger reason than before for believing that Moses and Hobab were more familiar with the desert of Sinai and the Negeb border of Canaan, than the wisest of the destructive critics of today.⁶

Among the explorers who agree with Dr. Trumbull in respect to his location of Kadesh-Barnea is Dr. Camden M. Cobern, who has a good name among archeologists, and who has himself traveled over the territory in question. We will listen to a statement by him:

The two oldest documents of the Pentateuch make Kadesh-Barnea the permanent residence of the Israelites during almost the entire 'forty years' of the wanderings. The two other basal documents give it prominence, the one at the beginning and the other at the final stage of these desert journeys. Next to Mt. Sinai this little oasis appears in all the documents as the most important stopping-place of the Israelites on their way from Egypt to the Holy Land and, according to the general agreement of scholars, while they stopped but a year at Sinai, they made this their ecclesiastical center for some thirty-eight years, the ark resting here while the tribes scattered through the *wadis* lying around it. That 'Ain-Kadis ['Ayn-Qadees] is the true location of the ancient Kadesh-Barnea of Scripture 'is so patent that no other site can really be said in the minds of scholars to rival it.' (G. L. Robinson, *Biblical World*, XVII, 327.) 'Kadesh is undoubtedly 'Ain-

⁵ *Id.*, pp. 311-319.

⁶ *Id.*, p. 320.

Kadis [ʿAyn-Qadees].’ (L. B. Paton, *Journal of Biblical Literature*, April, 1913, p. 22.) This is one of the few stopping-places of the Israelites that seems to be settled with scientific positiveness. It is the only stopping-place between Egypt and Palestine which is called in the Bible ‘a city’; the usual name even yet in the desert for any permanent group of tents. Here it was that the Hebrew nation was born; and the world today is a very different world from what it would have been if the Hebrew people had not come to birth in the desert.⁷

Christianity is a historical religion, and some of its outstanding features are embedded in, and taught by, history. The experience of the children of Israel is the historical story of the bondage of sin, deliverance through the miraculous exercise of a power outside the bondservant, and the entering into the promised inheritance. The Pentateuchal history thus supplies the very foundations of the Christian gospel, and it is of primary importance that the reliability of this history should be firmly established. It cannot be too often declared or too strongly emphasized that as a matter of simple fact the writings of Moses are the most reliable documents of all the writings of antiquity, and that in the whole field of archeology, taking the word in its broadest sense, no evidence has been discovered which convincingly contradicts these five well-known books. This is a significant fact, and should be given due weight in the investigation of the reliability of ancient documents. Some modern writers seem to accept as a settled conclusion that the Holy Scriptures must be regarded as unreliable until their testimony has been fully established by other witnesses. This is not a fair treatment of these age-old writings. They are entitled to be regarded as wholly reliable until their trustworthiness has been successfully indicted, not by mere assumptions, or “the assured results” of the higher critics, but by acknowledged facts. In view of the constantly increasing evidence brought to light through the unbiased efforts of scholarly investigators, it is becoming more and more difficult to demonstrate the untrustworthiness of the old Book.

As to the true spirit which should characterize the searcher after truth, and the method which should be employed by him, a brief statement may be in order in this connection:

⁷ *Recent Explorations in Palestine*, pp. 98, 99. By Camden M. Cobern. Funk and Wagnalls Company.

Much is said about the value of the historical method in these days; too much can hardly be said for it. Ours is an historical religion having an historical sacred book. The historical method, where fully applicable, is final in its conclusions. In the consideration of historical data, *whatever is, is true*, and nothing else is true; so anachronisms are fatal. Biblical scholarship accepts these demands in the name of the historical method, and is ready to respond to every challenge and submit all data of an historical religion to the rigid tests of the historical method, wherever these tests are applicable. The data for the application of the historical method to this part of Biblical history are not as yet complete; but, as far as accuracy in such data is attainable, the facts, whether passing allusions, the record of historical events, or the chronology of the period, all contribute toward one conclusion, that the Pentateuchal history is trustworthy and contemporary history, and that these data of archeological Pentateuchal times indicate the times of the Pentateuch.⁸

By the application of the historical method a location for the Kadesh-Barnea of the exodus has been discovered which seems to meet all the requirements of the case without involving any disagreement with the approved facts which establish other related features of the exodus. While it is not necessary to determine the exact location of Kadesh-Barnea in order to be sure that the Kadesh-Barnea of the Pentateuch was an actual city, yet the discovery of the true site of this important center of dwelling and wandering is a confirmation of the Mosaic record which affords real satisfaction, and enables us to follow with greater certainty the definite route followed by the children of Israel in their journey from Sinai to the east side of the Jordan.

⁸ *Moses and the Monuments*, p. 161. By Melvin Grove Kyle. Bibliotheca Sacra Company.

XIII

ANCIENT JERICHO TESTIFIES

Excavation is an instructor, substantiator, and enlightener, and should be of interest to all who read and study the records of past times. During the past twenty years excavators have unearthed much that has thrown light on ancient cities and customs; especially has this been the case in Palestine. . . . The last place attacked by the pick, spade and crowbar of the excavator, and with most valuable results, is the site of Jericho, the city first taken by the Israelites after they had crossed the Jordan.

—RECORDS OF THE PAST, 1910.

LET us now take another look at Kadesh-Barnea. A generation has passed away. The years of wandering prescribed to the children of Israel have come to an end. The rallying call has sounded for them to come together preparatory to their entrance into the land promised to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. And so they come, the children of those whose unbelief had shut them out from the inheritance. They are the children of the desert, having grown up under primitive and trying surroundings. Try to put yourselves for a moment in their places, and consider how you would respond to the summons to enter upon a campaign to take possession of a country inhabited by hostile peoples. Where are the weapons of warfare? Where are the means of transportation? Where is the necessary supply of food? Where are the forces trained for battle?

It is easy to read the simple record of this whole experience without raising these questions, taking it for granted that we would have at once gathered up the small outfit necessary for a nomad life, abandoned our temporary homes, and have joined the other wanderers at Kadesh-Barnea without hesitation. But think a moment. If we are ready and willing to abandon our homes now and become "pilgrims and strangers" in fact, then we would have joined those who at the call of Joshua assembled at Kadesh-Barnea to enter upon a campaign of battle and march. It was then purely a venture of faith—a faith which results in definite action on the ground that what God has promised, He

is able also to perform. So it is now. "The weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but mighty before God to the casting down of strongholds." "This is the victory that hath overcome the world, even our faith."

The scene of rebellion is the scene of renewed loyalty. At Kadesh-Barnea the people rejected the counsel of God, refusing to believe that He could fulfil it, and then attempted to atone for their unbelief by persisting in going to battle contrary to the divine instruction. At Kadesh-Barnea the children of the unbelievers assembled to demonstrate their faith by obedience in commencing anew the march into the promised land. A few words concerning this seem to be appropriate:

It was indeed most fitting that, at the end of the thirty-seven years' wanderings, Israel should once more gather at Kadesh. There they had been scattered, when the evil report which the spies had brought led to their unbelief and rebellion; and thence had the old generation carried, as it were, its sentence of death back into the wilderness, till during these long and weary years its full terms had been exhausted. And now a new generation was once more at Kadesh. From the very spot where the old was broken off was the fresh start to be made. God is faithful to His purpose; *He* never breaks off. If the old was interrupted, it had been by man's unbelief and rebellion, not by failure on the part of God; and when He resumed His work, it was exactly where it had been so broken off. And man also must return to where he has departed from God, and to where sentence has been pronounced against him, before he enters on his new journey to the Land of Promise. But what solemn thoughts might not have been expected in this new generation, as they once more stood ready to resume their journeying on the spot where that of their fathers had been arrested. As *He* had sanctified His Name in Kadesh by judgment, would *they* now sanctify it by their faith and willing obedience?¹

The hosts of Israel now march on by easy stages from Kadesh-Barnea around the east side of the Dead Sea to Shittim near the river Jordan. When a census of the people was taken in the plains of Moab, Moses, Joshua and Caleb were found to be the sole survivors of that company who camped first at Kadesh-Barnea. Even Aaron and Miriam, who were so closely associated with Moses throughout his leadership, had fallen asleep. And now Moses gave his farewell address to the people, and "died there in the land of Moab," and "no man knoweth of his

¹ *Exodus and Wanderings in the Wilderness*, p. 184. By Alfred Ederheim. Fleming H. Revell Company.

sepulchre unto this day." Joshua was by divine appointment made the successor of Moses in the leadership, and under his instruction the people resumed their journey and crossed the Jordan by the way which was miraculously opened for them.

And now they are in the promised land, but their foes were also there. It is therefore both their privilege and their duty to coöperate with their divine Leader in accepting by faith the victory which He will give them over their enemies. Two significant events should not be overlooked. The children of Israel were circumcised and they kept the passover "in the plains of Jericho." Thus they were ceremonially set apart from other people as God's possession, and they recognized anew that their hope for overcoming was based upon the blood of the slain lamb, the same blood by which their parents were delivered out of Egypt. They are now ready for action, and so their Leader, the "prince of the host of Jehovah," appeared to Joshua and gave him the definite instruction for the capture of Jericho. All the indications of military warfare, either ancient or modern, were entirely lacking. The people were to walk and to shout at the close of their walking. The test imposed upon them was that they were to shout the shout of victory while the walls were still standing. If you had been there, would you have done this? Would you not have felt justified in saying, "Well, I do not wish to be fanatical, and when the walls fall down, I will be among the first to shout, but I see no reason for shouting victory while the walls are still standing"? But on this basis the walls would never have fallen down, and you would never have shouted. "By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, after they had been compassed about for seven days." The shout of faith, while the walls still stood, was the response of faith to the promise of God, and made possible the fulfilment of the promise.

Such in brief are the facts concerning the capture of Jericho, as presented in the Scriptures. But, we may properly inquire, have the discoveries of explorers and archeologists contributed anything which confirms this record? First, has it been satisfactorily proven that there was actually such a city as Jericho? Second, is there any available evidence to show that it was captured in the way described in the Bible? Such questions as these are quite in order here, and are entitled to plain answers. The spade has furnished the answers.

It is a remarkable and most interesting fact that recent geographical investigations and actual excavations in the near east have made it possible to identify the sites of more than fifty cities mentioned in the Scriptures, and among them is Jericho. A brief statement concerning this city follows:

The same Society [The Deutsche Orient-Gesellschaft] undertook, in the years 1907-1909, the excavation of Jericho. The work was entrusted to the direction of Professor Sellin, of Vienna. The digging occupied about three weeks in the spring of 1907, and about three months in the early part of each of the years 1908 and 1909. At the bottom of the mound traces of a prehistoric occupation of the site were uncovered, but as these were under the foundations of a Canaanitish fortress, which were not demolished, nothing further was ascertained about them. Above this prehistoric city were the remains of an Amorite or Canaanite city. A jar handle found in the lower half of this Canaanite stratum was stamped with a scarab of the time of the twelfth Egyptian dynasty, which indicates that this occupation goes back to about 2000 B. C. The walls of this early city were traced on all sides of the tell except the east. On this side, where the Ain es-Sultan is (otherwise called Elisha's Fountain, from the incident in 2 Kings 2: 19-22), the wall has entirely disappeared. This early city was small. The whole of it could have been put into the Colosseum at Rome. All early Palestinian cities were, however, small. In the city was a citadel with a double wall. Each wall represented a different period of history. Both were built of brick, as were the houses of the time. The outer wall was between four and five feet thick and appeared to be older; the inner one was about ten feet thick. They were joined here and there by transverse walls. The city had been burned apparently about 1300-1200 B. C., perhaps at the time of the Hebrew conquest.

Above the ruins of the pre-Israelitish city were the remains of the Hebrew town. The earliest of these remains seems to date from the ninth century B. C. (see 1 Kings 19: 34), as it was rebuilt in the days of Ahab. The Israelites, in Sellin's judgment, made the city considerably larger than it had been in the earlier time. A wall, which he believed to be the wall of the Hebrew period, was found on all sides except the east, considerably outside the older wall. . . . On the eastern edge of the Israelitish stratum the remains of a large stone building were found. Sellin thinks this may be the palace and fortress built by Hiel in the time of Ahab (1 Kings 16: 34). This Israelitish city seems to have flourished only about two hundred years. It was probably destroyed in the time of Sennacherib, about 700 B. C. Sellin thought he found traces of another rebuilding which must soon have followed the destruction, but this Jericho was also destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar in 586 B. C. At some time after the Babylonian exile the city was rebuilt and flourished until destroyed by Vespasian in 70 A. D. It was rebuilt after 325 A. D. and continued until destroyed by the

invasion of the Persian King Chosroes, in 614 A. D. Some slight settlements have existed on the mound in Moslem times, but the Jericho of to-day is more than a mile distant.²

One of the reasons given by the higher critics why the Biblical record concerning the capture of Jericho cannot be relied upon is that it would be impossible for the Israelites to march around the city seven times in one day. This reasoning is based upon the assumption that Jericho was at least approximately the size of one of our modern cities, New York, Philadelphia, Chicago, or even Washington; but when the simple facts, established by the spade of the archeologist, are known, this indictment of the reliability of the Holy Scriptures can be promptly consigned to the waste basket along with a large number of others of the same character. Jericho has been dug up. Its walls have been uncovered. Actual measurements have been made which show that seven times around the city would be a trifle more than $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles. Surely this is not a very serious day's journey. Many children walk a greater distance than this every day in going to and from school. Again the utter foolishness of some of the critical assumptions is clearly demonstrated, and the reliability of the Bible is vindicated.

Interest in the capture of Jericho naturally centers in the statement that at the sound of the trumpets and the shout of the people "the wall fell down flat, so that the people went up into the city, every man straight before him, and they took the city" (Josh. 6: 20). There have been different interpretations of this simple record of a very unusual occurrence. Of course the higher critics have in the past regarded it as one of the myths of ancient time, a bit of folk-lore unworthy of serious consideration. Whether they will attempt to maintain this claim in view of the very recent testimony of archeology, briefly mentioned in this chapter, may possibly be doubtful, although it does not seem to be easy for them to discard any feature of their destructive criticism. Another explanation of this affair is that the walls were thrown down by an earthquake. It will be readily granted that this is theoretically possible, for all down through the centuries cities have been seriously damaged by earthquakes. There is one consideration, however, which renders

² *Archæology and the Bible*, pp. 98, 99. By George A. Barton. American Sunday School Union, Philadelphia.

this view practically untenable. It demands that a violent convulsion in nature of sufficient force to lay low the walls of a besieged city should occur simultaneously with the victorious shout of the besiegers. The most of us will, I am quite sure, find it easier to believe that there was a direct intervention of a personal God than to try to avoid it by such an unwarranted and unreasonable supposition. One writer seems to make an effort to defend both views:

The geological situation sheds great light upon the capture of the city by Joshua. If the city was built, as we suppose it to have been, upon the unconsolidated sedimentary deposits which accumulated to a great depth in the Jordan valley during the enlargement of the Dead Sea, which took place in Pleistocene (or glacial) times, the sudden falling of the walls becomes easily credible to anyone who believes in the personality of God and in His power either to foreknow the future or to direct at His will the secondary causes with which man has to deal in nature. The narrative does not state that the blowing of the rams' horns of themselves effected the falling of the walls. It was simply said that at a specified juncture on the 7th day the walls would fall, and that they actually fell at that juncture. The miracle may, therefore, be regarded as either that of prophecy, in which the Creator by foretelling the course of things to Joshua, secured the junction of Divine and human activities which constitutes a true miracle, or we may regard the movements which brought down the walls to be the result of direct divine action, such as is exerted by man when he produces an explosion of dynamite at a particular time and place.³

In marked contrast with this compromising effort is the frank testimony of those who have seen with their own eyes the results of patient excavation. They bear witness that the ruins furnish convincing proof that the Biblical record is true to fact; that the walls actually fell outward, making access to the city easy for the host of Israel; and that a destructive fire has left the traces of such a visitation. We may well be thankful that in the providence of God reliable excavators have been moved upon to make such investigations as thus attest to the trustworthiness of His word. The same miracle-working God who opened the way for His children through the Red Sea and through Jordan in order that they might enter into the promised land, wrought at Jericho to enable them to enter upon the actual possession of the inheritance. But every step in their experience was by faith. "By

³ George Frederick Wright in *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, p. 1592.

faith they passed through the Red Sea as by dry land, which the Egyptians assaying to do were swallowed up. By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, after they had been compassed about seven days" (Heb. 11: 29, 30). And today, in a time of most pronounced skepticism, the fallen walls of Jericho are appearing to bear witness to the miracle-working power of faith. This time of peril is also a time of privilege.

In the inspired record of the destruction of Jericho it is stated that "they burnt the city with fire," and again the spade has confirmed the accuracy of this record. The story is interesting. In 1931 Sir Charles Marston, the financial backer of the recent explorations at Jericho, delivered a lecture in Birmingham, England, in which he mentioned some facts which strongly corroborate the statement that Jericho was burned. This lecture was reported in *The Sunday School Times* for November 14, 1931, from which this extract is taken:

The following year [1928] we organized a second expedition which carried out a much more thorough excavation of the site of Jericho. During that visit Professor Garstang carefully examined some 60,000 fragments of pottery from the burnt stratum of the city without finding a single one which he considered justified a later date than 1400 B. C.

The absence of the so-called Mycenaean Ware from this stratum furnished an impressive indication of the correctness of this early date, and the only piece of this type of pottery that was found at all came to light on the surface right above it.

Not content with these conclusions, Professor Garstang, with the financial aid of Lord Melchett and myself, undertook a third expedition to Jericho this spring. He has examined another 40,000 potsherds including complete vases, many of the latter found *in situ* in the rooms of the burnt houses, and they all confirm his previous conclusions regarding the date 1400 B. C. . . .

It is remarkable how thoroughly and systematically Jericho was burnt, and when it was in actual occupation. In the course of his many excavations Professor Garstang has become quite familiar with the strata of burnt cities, but none of these has left such extraordinary signs of thoroughness of destruction by fire as the Jericho of Joshua.

Strange as it may sound, the very burning has been responsible for the preservation of many portions of food. In the ordinary course these would have long since decayed and perished, but the burning has carbonized and so preserved them for a period of over 3,000 years. So there have been unearthened stores of carbonized wheat, barley, lentils, dates, onions, pepper-corns, and even pieces of dough. My wife now has some of these in her possession, and they include also a piece of rope such as might well have been used to lower the spies from the

walls. The many burnt reeds suggest that these were what Rahab used to cover and conceal the spies on the roof. Large quantities of burnt acacia wood indicate that this was the type of timber in general use.

Some may possibly wonder whether the inhabitants of Canaan at the time of the invasion of Joshua were sufficiently skilled in building so that they were able to fortify a city according to modern standards. One archeologist mentions the natural advantages of Jericho located as it was on a hill about forty feet above the level of the plain, and continues thus:

The excavations [in 1908-1909] proved that from the earliest historic time these natural advantages had been increased by every possible artifice known to ancient engineers, until it had become a veritable Gibraltar. The oldest city, which was in the form of an irregular ellipse, somewhat egg-shaped, with the point at the southwest, was first surrounded with a rampart following the contour of the hill, a rampart so powerful that it commands the admiration of all military experts who have examined it.

The walls even in their ruins are some 28 feet high. They were built in three sections: (a) a substratum of clay, gravel and small stones, making a deposit upon the rock about 3 or 4 feet deep, somewhat analogous to modern concrete; (b) a rubble wall, 6 to 8 feet thick, of large stones laid up to a height of 16 feet upon this conglomerate, the lowest layers of the stone being enormously large; (c) upon all this a brick wall over 6 feet thick, still remaining, in places, 8 feet high. Not even Megiddo, famous as a military center throughout all the ancient world, shows such workmanship. . . . All the centuries were not able to produce a natural crevice in this fortification. At the north, which was the chief point of danger, and perhaps along other sections also, a second wall was built about 100 feet inside the first, and almost as strong, while still another defense ('the citadel'), with 265 feet of frontage, was protected not only by another mighty wall but by a well-constructed glacis.⁴

Jericho was indeed a real city with real fortifications. The inhabitants may have felt secure in it, as they watched an unarmed host marching around it day after day with no apparent results, but at the end of the seventh time around on the seventh day, when the believing people claimed by faith the city which Jehovah had given to them and gave expression to this claim with a confident shout, the walls actually fell at just that mo-

⁴ Camden M. Cobern in *The International Standard Bible Encyclopædia*, p. 2230.

ment in such a way that the attackers could march in and take possession of the devoted city. The statements of the Biblical writer and the testimony of archeology are in full agreement, no matter what the atheist or the skeptic may say. It is always safe to believe God.

The significant result of such work as has here been described is clearly stated in the following paragraph:

Our old Old Testament of the beginning of this century has now become a new Old Testament. This rejuvenation of the old book is due to the large progress made in explorations, discoveries, and decipherment of antiquities during the present century, and preëminently during the last half of it. Almost every Bible land has been laid under tribute to this cause, and some of them have poured into our archeological coffers more than we can as yet measure or interpret. Private and public expeditions are at work to-day in several of these oriental lands, and they promise to yield fruit as fast as we can care for it. Remains of all the principal peoples mentioned in the Old Testament now decorate the cases of our museums, and tons of new material are being gathered in at the end of every season. . . . The scope of the results of these discoveries is immeasurable. They touch almost every part of the Old Testament. . . . There are few names of peoples now remaining in the Old Testament about whom we have not secured some new facts. . . . The meanings of some words in the Old Testament have assumed a new importance since the opening of the magical Babylonian-Assyrian cuneiform tongue, a half-sister to the Hebrew. The larger meaning for the words of the Old Testament assures us of a better understanding of the original Hebrew, and a more expressive and sympathetic meaning for the words penned by the writers of the Old Testament.⁵

⁵ *The Monuments and the Old Testament*, pp. 291-293. By Ira Maurice Price. American Baptist Publication Society, Philadelphia.

XIV

CITIES OF PALESTINE IDENTIFIED

Archeological research in Palestine and neighboring lands during the past century has completely transformed our knowledge of the historical and literary background of the Bible. It no longer appears as an absolutely isolated monument of the past, as a phenomenon without relation to its environment. . . . The excessive skepticism shown toward the Bible by important historical schools of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, certain phases of which will appear periodically, has been progressively discredited. Discovery after discovery has established the accuracy of innumerable details, and has brought increased recognition of the value of the Bible as a source of history.—WILLIAM FOXWELL ALBRIGHT.

IT may seem like a far cry from the experience at old Jericho in the fifteenth century B. C. to the experience of the Apostle Paul in the first century A. D., but they both teach the same lesson, and clearly indicate the ever-present and age-old danger of trusting in human wisdom and the power of the flesh in the conflict against the enemy. With apparent ease Jericho had been captured. All that the people were required to do was to march and to shout. It surely would not be necessary for all the people to march about thirteen miles to Ai in order to take possession of that city. And so the spies who had inspected the ground advised, "Let not all the people go up." This was accepted as wise counsel, but when it was followed, it led to a disgraceful defeat. The attacking force "fled before the men of Ai." Why? Because sin and self-confidence do not spell victory. When the plain command of the invisible Captain of Jehovah's host is disobeyed, and His personal leadership is thus forfeited, the way is opened for the enemy to triumph. So it was then, and so it is now. When Joshua prayed, "Oh, Lord, what shall I say, after that Israel hath turned their backs before their enemies?" the Lord's answer clearly revealed the cause of their trouble: "Israel hath sinned: yea, they have even transgressed my covenant which I commanded them." After Jehovah's instruction had been followed, and the hindering cause had been removed, then the capture of Ai was a simple matter. It should be noted, however, that the way of victory at Ai was not the same as at Jericho. This should emphasize to us that we need

divine counsel every day, and that it is unsafe to trust to our own wisdom in our warfare. "We walk by faith, not by sight."

It will be of interest to us to learn whether explorations in Palestine contribute anything of importance concerning the second city which Joshua captured. The city of Ai has been located and diligent digging has been done in uncovering its ancient site.

Testimony concerning the identification of this city is borne by a writer whose years of personal investigation in Palestine naturally inspire confidence in his statements:

Ai is twice referred to in the wanderings of Abram (Gen. 12: 8; 13: 3) as being to the east of Bethel. The next reference to Ai occurs in Joshua 7: 8, where it was taken by the Hebrews on their arrival and completely destroyed. Joshua 8: 17 implies that Bethel was so near to Ai, that its inhabitants felt their fate to depend on that of Ai and accordingly joined the inhabitants of Ai against Joshua. The King of Ai is mentioned as one of the smitten kings in Joshua 12: 9, and here also Ai is described as beside Bethel.

The site of Ai has been identified with the 'mound' Et-Tell, a little to the east of Bethel, but only soundings have been taken. These soundings, however, have revealed the fact that this mound has been occupied by the Canaanites down to the Late Bronze Age, c. 1600-1200, but had been then destroyed and never subsequently occupied, which exactly corresponds with the narrative of Joshua. The site awaits excavation, but it is clear that Ai had been a Canaanite fort of defense on the eastern side.¹

After the capture of Ai Joshua continued his victorious campaign, as recorded in the book of Joshua, chapter 10: 28 to 11: 11. The following nine cities fell into his hands one after another: Makkedah, Libnah, Lachish, Gezer, Eglon, Hebron, Debir (Kirjath-sepher), Gaza, and Hazor. All these cities have been located by modern explorers, and some of them have been quite thoroughly excavated. While all the details are of real interest, yet the necessary limits of our space prevent us from covering all the ground. Some of the facts about Gezer demand our attention:

Forty years ago the site of Gezer was unknown. Its site was discovered by that sound and brilliant French archeologist, M. Clermont-Ganneau. In 1871 M. Clermont-Ganneau found it stated by a medi-

¹ *Digging Up Biblical History*, p. 103. By J. Garrow Duncan. The Macmillan Company.

æval Arabic author, Mujir ed-Din, that the sounds of a *mêlée* at a place called Khoulda could be heard at Tell-ej-Jezer. The site of Khoulda was known; so the next time that M. Ganneau visited it, in 1874, he inquired of the inhabitants whether there was a Tell-ej-Jezer near to it; they replied that there was and pointed out the Tell to him, about three miles to the north. It lies some twenty-eight miles north-east of Tell el-Hesy, and nineteen miles west-northwest of Jerusalem. This, however, was not all. M. Ganneau heard that an inscription was to be seen near the Tell: so proceeding with workmen to the point indicated, about 5,600 feet east of the center of the Tell, he soon discovered on a rock an inscription, about six feet in length, written partly in Greek, and partly in Aramaic, *i. e.*, 'Of Alkios, Boundary of Gezer.' Soon afterwards two other rocks were found in a line north and south of the first, at the same distance from Tell, similarly inscribed; and in 1898 Père Lagrange found a fourth. Alkios was presumably a Greek governor of the place; the words 'Boundary of Gezer' demonstrated that the spot was really the site of the ancient Gezer. . . .

Gezer is first actually mentioned in history as one of the cities taken by Thothmes III (c. 1475 B. C.); but scarabs and other Egyptian objects found in it testify to a very considerable trade and communication with Egypt in the time of the 12th and 13th Dynasties, some 500 years earlier, and show that it was already then a place of some importance. We hear of Gezer next in the Tell el-Amarna letters, three of which are written by its governor, Yapahi. In these letters Yapahi declares that he is hard pressed by the *Sa-gas*—a people sometimes identified with the Habiri, and certainly allied to them—that his brother has rebelled, and joined them, and that he is in urgent need of help from the Egyptian king; and Abdi-hiba, of Jerusalem, complains of the disloyalty of the Gezerites. Gezer is mentioned next by Meremptah (c. 1230 B. C.) in the inscription already quoted, 'Gezer is taken.' In the traditions of the Israelite conquest, its king and the men with him, coming to the help of Lachish, are said to have all been slain by Joshua (Josh. 10: 33). Its Canaanite inhabitants, however, were not driven out, but reduced to servitude (Josh. 16: 10—Jud. 1: 29). They remained in possession of it till the time of Solomon, when, we are told (1 Kings 9: 16), the then king of Egypt attacked and burnt Gezer, slew the Canaanites in it, and gave the site as a marriage portion to his daughter, whom Solomon had taken as his wife.²

Tell-ej-Jezer [Gezer] occupies a conspicuous position, over 250 feet above the plain and 750 feet above the sea, on a ridge of hills some 20 miles northwest of Jerusalem overlooking the plain toward Jaffa which is 17 miles distant. It is in plain sight of the two chief caravan roads of southern Palestine which it controlled. The ancient Gezer was well known from references to it in the Egyptian records, the names of several governors of Gezer being given in letters dating from about

² *Modern Research as Illustrating the Bible*, pp. 46-49. By S. R. Driver. British Academy and Oxford University Press.

1400 B. C. and Menephtah (about 1200 B. C.) calling himself 'Binder of Gezer.' The discovery of the boundary stones of Gezer positively identified it. It was thoroughly excavated by R. A. Stewart Macalister in 1902-5; 1907-9, during which time 10,000 photographs were made of objects found. No explorations have been so long continued on one spot or have brought more unique discoveries or thrown more light upon the development of Palestinian culture and religion, and none have been reported as fully.³

The place, however, which, of all that have been investigated outside of Jerusalem, has given the greatest results, is Gezer, where M. Clermont-Ganneau had already discovered a bilingual inscription in Hebrew and Greek, which defined the limits of the city. Work was begun here by the Palestine Exploration Fund, June 4, 1902, and it was pushed with vigor, under the personal direction of R. A. Stewart Macalister under three different firmans, until March, 1909.

This tell is situated about five miles southeast of the modern town of Ramleh, not far from the road that leads from Jaffa to Jerusalem, in the edge of the fertile maritime plain, and near the foot-hills of the Judean mountains. The mound itself is quite an elevation near the modern village Abu Shusheh and it still stands out as the most prominent landmark in all that region, being distinctly visible for miles up and down the plain. It is a place which was easily fortified, the hill being steep, and because of its height, the approach of an enemy could be seen while it was yet far away. The rocky hillsides to the south and west, and the fertile fields to the north and west, furnished opportunity for hunting, grazing, and farming, 'the three primitive modes of livelihood.' We are not surprised to find, therefore, that Gezer was inhabited by a primitive race, perhaps five thousand years ago.

Because of the further fact that the great coast-line trade route from Egypt to Babylon passed near, it was certainly a place of great importance. One can easily see, therefore, that Gezer played a very prominent part in the early history of that region. Indeed, it was one of the strongholds of that land at the time that the children of Israel were led across Jordan, and as Jerusalem, Gezer held out for a long time against the invaders. . . .

The earliest written reference to the city as yet found is an inscription on the wall of the Temple of Karnak which says that Thothmes III had captured Gezer together with certain other cities. From letters in the celebrated Tell el-Amarna correspondence, it is learned that at about 1450 B. C. Gezer, although she had a king of her own, was under the suzerainty of Pharaoh of Egypt. Indeed, three of those letters were written by the king himself, Yapahi, and are a request for help against hostile and nomadic tribes that were a menace to him. How interesting it would have been if the replies to these letters had been found at Gezer. We learn from the Scriptures that this ancient city,

³ *Recent Explorations in Palestine*, p. 59. By Camden M. Cobern. Funk and Wagnalls Company.

even in David's time, remained in the hands of the Philistines (2 Sam. 5: 25), although at an early date it was subject to Joshua. Finally, however, Pharaoh took Gezer and having burned it, gave it to his daughter, one of the wives of Solomon, whereupon Solomon rebuilt the city (1 Kings 9: 16f.). From this time on, for many centuries, even down through the Maccabean period, and, indeed, to the time of the Crusades, when Saladin conducted 'futile negotiations with Richard Cœur-de-Lion,' this has been a place of great historic interest. And as late as 1495 A. D. its existence is shown by its connection with an encounter which the governor of Jerusalem had with a predatory tribe of Bedouins. Its importance, however, lies not in the fact that, as a city, it remained to so late a date, but rather in the opposite fact that it was already in existence so long before the occupations of Palestine by the Israelites. For these reasons, the work at Gezer was pushed with the highest of hopes and the greatest of expectations and not without great reward. As Masterman has written, 'Where else do we know of a site, about which have surged the currents of civilization for four millenniums, associated with Amorites and pre-Amorites, with David and the Philistines, with Solomon and a Pharaoh, with Alexander and the Maccabees, with Saladin and Cœur-de-Lion,' and, one may add, with Napoleon and Abraham Pasha, both of whom in modern times passed beneath its slopes.⁴

From Joshua 15: 15 we learn that Debir, one of the cities captured by Joshua, was formerly Kiriath-sepher, often printed Kirjath-sepher. The site of this ancient city has recently been explored quite fully, and the results of this work are both interesting and informing. One of the explorers, Melvin Grove Kyle, gave a report of this work, some extracts from which are here submitted:

Kirjath-sepher was one of the greatest fortresses of the south at the time of the Conquest and, unlike Gezer, or any other place that has been excavated, the different strata of culture have been but little disturbed by later building operations and the history of the place ends with the Exile and the end of the earlier national life of Israel and Judah. No rubbish of later civilizations, Persian, Greek, Maccabean, Roman Crusader or Arabic are here to confuse the history of culture. Better than any other archeological site yet touched it illustrates in regular order, usually in undisturbed layers, all the civilizations of the land from before 2000 B. C. down to its final destruction a little after 600 B. C. by Nebuchadnezzar. Thus work here affords a complete conspectus of the culture of the land for nearly 2,000 years, the whole Canaanite Patriarchal period and the whole National Israelite period.

⁴ *Researches in Palestine*, pp. 51-54. By Llewellyn Lafayette Henson. S. D. Towne, Sudbury Building, Boston, Mass.

Already the work has progressed to a complete outline of that history, and year by year details of the picture have been added, and will be added, until the history of civilization for that long period in this land—with but one exception, the time of our Lord, the most important period in the history of the world—will be completely laid before us. Much more than this, it will be laid alongside of Biblical history, a contemporary witness and the final test of the historicity of the Biblical account. . . .

The founding of Kirjath-sepher was contemporaneous with the story of Abraham and Lot, the destruction of the Cities of the Plain, and, so, with the great break in the civilization of the Jordan valley. Our researches in 1924 showed that from that time onward to the end of Bible history there was no civilization on the plain, it was uninhabitable as the Bible represents. This, however, does not give any date for any of these events; it only shows them to be contemporaneous. But things which by independent evidence are shown to be contemporaneous are thereby both attested, and most especially when the evidence on one side is dug up out of the ground. Only real events leave material remains.

Here at Kirjath-sepher are clearly distinguished three stages in that history. A pre-Philistine period, when little Philistine influence is discernible, a Philistine period, and then a post-Philistine period. Thus the things dug up here, when laid alongside of Egyptian history and the Biblical record, make a complete historical harmony.

These historical parallels run all the way through this material history at this old fortress. Sometimes an element of humor appears in the parallel. Isaiah must have smiled sarcastically as he wrote his famous diatribe against the foolish fashions of the women of his day. The names he gives to the tight skirts that they could not step out, the permanent waves, and the lip-sticks were different from those in vogue at this present pampered age, but the styles seem to have been much the same. At Kirjath-sepher in the city of the kings of Judah about the time of Isaiah so many vanity palettes were found that it seemed as if every Jewess in the town must have had one. The debris here tells exactly the story that justified Isaiah's arraignment of his generation.⁵

Another archeologist whose name will not sound strange to the readers of this book, furnishes some further testimony concerning this fortress of the time of Joshua:

Tell-Beit-Mirsim has been identified as the ruins of Kirjath-sepher, and excavation has proved that it was continuously occupied from 2200-600 B. C. and was an important place in the time of the Hebrew Kings. It is curious that there is no reference to it in the Old Testament narrative after its capture by Othniel. The earliest strata shows

⁵ In *The Evangelical Quarterly*, Oct., 1930. James Clarke & Co., Ltd., 9 Essex Street, Strand, London.

abundant evidence of occupation by the Hyksos. The city wall had been 40 feet high and 14 feet thick. The early fortress covered an area of 7½ acres. The 'defences include the use of concrete in a system of casemates,' which served not only as stores for the garrison but also as traps for an enemy who had scaled the walls. The excavations cover the period between the capture of the town by Joshua down to its destruction by Sennacherib in 701 B. C.⁶

Hazor was another important city which was captured by Joshua in the campaign which we are reviewing. The site of this city has been definitely located, as is shown by the following extract:

Hazor has been identified with Hadireh, at the foot of Jebel Hadireh, three miles southwest of Kedesh. It is directly west of Lake Huleh. A rocky hillock with a few ruins are the only evidences of the existence and former glory of the city of King Jabin, which, at one time, was the head of all the kingdoms of the northern confederates (Joshua 11: 10, 11). It was the only one of the captured cities of this region which was burned by command of Joshua (Joshua 11: 13). The city was subsequently rebuilt and reoccupied by another Jabin, king of Canaan, the oppressor of Israel in the period of the Judges (Judges 4: 2). Hazor was selected as one of the garrison towns of the north by King Solomon and a part of the levy which he raised in Israel was devoted to the rebuilding and strengthening of its fortifications (1 Kings 9: 15). It was taken and destroyed by Tiglath-Pileser.⁷

"A great deal of geographic activity is going on in Babylonia, Assyria, Syria, Asia Minor and Egypt. Much has already been done in locating sites mentioned in the Bible. All these efforts are of great value for a more accurate understanding of the geographical references in the Scriptures. All the recent Biblical dictionaries, encyclopedias, commentaries and introductions are thus wonderfully enriched with much knowledge of Biblical places." (Duncan.)

Some of the other cities which are mentioned in the Biblical history of the occupation and the division of the promised land among the tribes of Israel under the leadership of Joshua, have been located and examined, but they add nothing special to the testimony which has here been cited. Viewed in the light of these

⁶ *Digging Up Biblical History*, p. 134. By J. Garrow Duncan. The Macmillan Company.

⁷ *The Land of Israel*, p. 114. By Robert Laird Stewart. Fleming H. Revell Company.

recent excavations two conclusions seem to be fully warranted: first, that the historical accuracy of that portion of the Scriptures dealing with this period is fully established, and confidence in the historical accuracy of the Scriptures as a whole is thereby strengthened; second, that the confirmation of the narrative in so many of its details renders it very difficult if not impossible to believe that the record of these events was compiled from current traditions three or more centuries after they occurred. The claim that the art of writing was unknown in those early times has been demolished by the spade of the archeologist in digging up documents written before the time of Moses. The character of the written record is so circumstantial and so thoroughly corroborated by the evidence of archeology that it is placing too great a strain upon credulity to ask us to believe that the historical books of the Bible are a compilation of myth and tradition made and edited freely by certain scribes called "redactors" by the higher critics. And what is the real explanation of this profound effort to substitute critical theories for the plain facts? Ah, it is only one phase of the fixed determination to eliminate the supernatural from Christianity and thus to reduce it to a mere philosophy. And just now, when so many professed defenders of Christianity are betraying it, we see that in the providence of God ancient cities have risen up and ancient documents have been brought to light, which bear such testimony as should confirm the faith of the wavering and bring joyous satisfaction to the hearts of loyal believers. Thus emphatic voices say to us now, as to Joshua of old, "Be strong and of good courage."

XV

THE CITY OF DAVID

Never has archeological research been pursued with such determination and such success as in the few years just past. In Egypt, in Mesopotamia, in Asia Minor, and very particularly in Palestine, great progress in excavation has been made. . . . Research at Jerusalem in recent years has been very extensive and has yielded results not only confirmatory of tentative conclusions reached in the latter half of the last century but also many new and most interesting results of its own.—HAROLD C. MORTON.

THE period from the conquest of Canaan under the leadership of Joshua, about 1400 B. C., to the reign of David, about 1000 B. C., is full of interest to the student of the Bible. The repeated experience of apostasy, repentance, and restoration in the time of the Judges, carries its lesson of the faithlessness of man and the faithfulness of God:

*Their enemies also oppressed them,
And they were brought into subjection under their hand.
Many times did he deliver them,
But they were rebellious in their counsel,
And were brought low in their iniquity.
Nevertheless he regarded their distress,
When he heard their cry:
And he remembered for them his covenant,
And repented according to the multitude of his
lovingkindnesses.*

Samuel the prophet was one of the outstanding characters of his time, who was especially honored of God. When the people determined to have a king who might judge them "like all the nations," the answer of God in response to the prayer of Samuel is a clear illustration of how the history of the world is like an open book before the eyes of the infinite One, who foresees the trend of human action and knows the end from the beginning. When Jehovah in His absolute deity declared, "They have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not be king over them," He beheld Himself in the days of His

flesh standing before Pilate, the Roman governor, and heard the leaders of the people who professed to be His loyal followers, reject Him with the cry, "We have no king but Cæsar." This was but the climax of the choice of the people in the days of Samuel.

The career of Saul, "a young man and a goodly," is a tragical example of a brilliant mind dominated by ambition and jealousy. His willful disobedience forfeited his right to the kingdom, and his consultation with a spiritualist medium was the final step in his apostasy. This brings us to the time of David, the commencement of a new era in the history of the development of the eternal purpose of God. Of interest to us in this connection are the observations of a well-known archeologist:

The first point where we find solid ground, and definite archeological contact with the historical record of the Old Testament, is at Jerusalem, which must have been captured by David prior to 1000 B. C. The date of Solomon, his successor, has been definitely fixed, by comparison with Assyrian monuments, at c. 1000-960. The reigns of Saul and David can therefore be assigned with certainty to the eleventh century.

At about 960 B. C. the northern kingdom was founded by Jeroboam, with its capital first at Shechem, and soon afterwards Omri transferred it to Samaria. In 721 Samaria was destroyed, and the northern kingdom came to an end.

Thus for the Hebrew pre-Exilic period we have several dates fixed with practical accuracy. The kingdom of Judah continued its precarious existence from its founding by Saul in the eleventh century to the year 597, when Nebuchadnezzar carried the *élite* of Jerusalem and Judah captive to Babylon. This constitutes the Hebrew pre-Exilic period. Though Northern Israel broke away from Judah about 960, and had its own king, the separation was confined to government and religion. Otherwise the people were the same people with the same civilization, and the remains found at Samaria—such as buildings, walls, pottery, jewelry—are much the same as those found at Jerusalem or other sites in Judah, except that the style of masonry is distinct.¹

We readily recall the fact that "the children of Benjamin did not drive out the Jebusites that inhabited Jerusalem; but the Jebusites dwell with the children of Benjamin unto this day," that is, until the time of the judges. In the course of time, however, a change came. Of the new order of things, and of some

¹ *Digging Up Biblical History*, pp. 166, 167. By J. Garrow Duncan. The Macmillan Company.

of the testimony of archeology concerning the site of ancient Jerusalem, one writer speaks thus:

At last, however, David appears. He had already been king at Hebron and now about the time that his reign over all Israel began, he succeeded in capturing Jerusalem.

When he undertook the task, the Jebusites, with feelings of security, taunted him with his supposed inability to dislodge them. Still, whatever may be the final verdict of text criticism as the real record of 2 Sam. 5: 6 and 8, he succeeded in capturing their fortress. This fortress which up to this time had been called Zion, David now made his place of residence and the capital of his united Kingdom, and named it the City of David. He then brought the ark of God to his new capital and Jerusalem became not only the military and political, but the religious center of the nation.

But the question still remains, 'Exactly where was that ancient stronghold?' Until the last few years, at least from the time of Constantine and possibly from the time of Josephus, it has been thought by all that the City of David was on the western hill of the present Jerusalem. But forty years ago, or more, the theory was advanced by Fergusson and others, that down to the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus, the name Mount Zion was applied, not to the western hill of the present city, but to the northern part of the eastern hill, that on which the Temple stood and which has always been known as Mount Moriah. This new view, with the change of Zion from the northern to the southern part of the hill, has been vigorously defended for thirty years or more by Birch and others, and as vigorously attacked by those who hold tenaciously to the traditional view. The result is that now it is pretty generally conceded that the stronghold of the Jebusites, later known as the City of David, was on the southern part of the eastern hill, and therefore that the name Zion does not belong to the western hill or the southwestern hill as was held for centuries, but to the eastern hill of Jerusalem. In other words, the names Zion and Moriah are but different names for parts of the same eastern hill, upon which stood the Temple as well as the City of David, and the palaces of David and Solomon.²

This view as to the exact location of "that ancient stronghold" is maintained by another writer, whose testimony follows:

The Old Testament narrative claims its existence as an Amorite fortress in the Middle Bronze Age at least (2000-1600), and implies unbroken occupation from that time onward.

Excavation has confirmed these facts, though there is evidence of an even earlier occupation. The site, however, is what is known as a

² *Researches in Palestine*, pp. 22, 23. By Llewellyn Lafayette Henson. S. D. Towne, Sudbury Building, Boston, Mass.

mixed stratification. The strata do not succeed each other in unbroken preservation, but are completely muddled by the digging of foundations for later structures down to the rock and by successive clearances, when the whole accumulation of ages within the city was thrown over the walls. It was quite impossible, therefore, to dissociate one period of occupation completely from another.

It is now accepted with practical unanimity that the site of ancient Zion, City of David, is not, as used to be supposed, the western hill of Jerusalem, but the small spur of rock, now known as Ophel, running down from the Temple Hill to the Pool of Siloam and the junction of the Kidron Valley with the Valley of Hinnom—a site which was inaccessible on every side except on the north, where it was defended by specially strong fortifications. Excavation on the western hill has never revealed anything that could be assigned to a very early date. Its occupation, so far as I could learn from observation of cuttings made for foundations of modern houses, does not date back beyond the time of the Maccabees. On Ophel, we found complete confirmation of the Old Testament narratives. Ancient Zion occupied this small spur of rock, and was so wonderfully fortified that the Jebusite boast of the lame and the blind being able to hold it even against David was no vain one. Ophel gave evidence of unbroken occupation from 2000 B. C. down to Arab times.³

The city of Jerusalem has had “a checkered history, and the continual changes in its fortunes have left their mark on the archeological remains of the site. Added to this is the fact that from its foundation it has been so unceasingly occupied, built and rebuilt, that every succeeding occupation has almost destroyed all evidence of previous civilizations.” Nevertheless diligent research has been carried on during recent years, and the results have been encouraging. Some of these results are submitted herewith:

Another question which is of primary importance, in understanding the topography of Jerusalem, is the course of her ancient walls, and, although much labor and money have been spent in trying to solve that problem, there still remains much uncertainty as to the matter. The southern wall, it is true, has been definitely located. Bliss has actually traced what is thought to be Hezekiah's wall from the Protestant cemetery, near Bishop Gobat's school, south of the southwest corner of the city, in an easterly direction, across the southern end of the western hill—the Jewish cemetery excepted—to a point almost due south of the Pool of Siloam, where a sharp angle is formed. Thence he followed it, in a northeasterly direction, across the Tyropœon and up the edge

³ *Digging Up Biblical History*, p. 112. By J. Garrow Duncan. The Macmillan Company.

of the Kedron valley, to a point on the southern end of Ophel, south-east of the Pool of Siloam, whence he believes it originally continued, including some of the portions of wall discovered by Guthe on the eastern side of the eastern hill, as well as the wall discovered by Warren. If this is Hezekiah's wall, of which there seems to be but little doubt, then the fact is established, that the Pool of Siloam was at that particular time, at least, inside the city. Smith says the fact that Hezekiah brought the waters of the Virgin's Spring through the tunnel into the Pool of Siloam is strong evidence that this wall was there in his time, for if the southwest hill was then outside the city, an enemy on it could have commanded the location of the pool at the mouth of the Tyropœon.

The northern walls are by no means so definitely located. The first of these is said to have run from a tower named Hippicus, near the present Jaffa Gate, on the western side of the city, in an easterly direction to the western cloister of the Temple. Traces of the causeway on which it crossed the Tyropœon are still to be seen at Wilson's Arch on the western side of the Haram.

The third wall, which was known as 'Agrippa's Wall' and is also spoken of as the first wall of Titus, extended, according to some writers, much farther to the north, including the new town which had grown up outside the former walls. Smith thinks it did not run so far north, but most probably followed somewhat the line of the present north wall of the city. But all agree that it began, as did the first wall, near the Jaffa Gate and ended on the east, as the present wall, near the Kedron.⁴

In the Biblical history of David and Solomon references are made to a place designated as "Millo," and some study has been given to the location and the nature of this place. The view of one archeologist is thus expressed:

The 'Millo' of Jerusalem was undoubtedly just such a citadel within the city, and this seems to me to have been the site of the original Millo. As we find at Megiddo, the inner wall was slender in comparison with the outer or northern wall of the citadel.

The great tower and stair bastions on the east wall of Zion, I am convinced, were part of the 'Millo' fortification. Josephus says that David captured the lower city, but failed to take the 'upper city.' If David broke through the east wall at the point where I found a section repaired by him, he would have captured the lower city; but if there were a citadel or upper fort in Zion, his entrance at that point could not have given him possession of it.⁵

⁴ *Researches in Palestine*, pp. 33-35. By Llewellyn Lafayette Henson. S. D. Towne, Sudbury Building, Boston, Mass.

⁵ *Digging Up Biblical History*, pp. 115, 116. By J. Garrow Duncan. The Macmillan Company.

The patient researches of various explorers, covering a period of almost exactly a century, have been rewarded abundantly, and in many cases a direct connection has been established between the Biblical record and the revelation made by the spade of the digger up of history. A paragraph or two will indicate some of these connections:

It is clear (2 Sam. 5: 7; 1 Chr. 11: 5) that the citadel 'Zion' of the Jebusites became the 'City of David,' or as G. A. Smith calls it, 'David's Burg,' after its capture by the Hebrews. The arguments for placing 'Zion' on the southeastern hill are given elsewhere, but a few facts relevant especially to the 'City of David' may be mentioned here: the capture of the Jebusite city by means of the gutter (2 Sam. 5: 8), which is most reasonably explained as 'Warren's Shaft'; the references to David's halt on his flight (2 Sam. 15: 23), and his sending Solomon to Gihon to be crowned (1 Kings 1: 33), and the common expression 'up,' used in describing the transference of the ark from the City of David to the Temple Hill (1 Kings 8: 1; 2 Chr. 5: 2; cf. 1 Kings 9: 24), are all consistent with this view. More convincing are the references to Hezekiah's aqueduct which brought the waters of Gihon 'down on the west side of the City of David' (2 Chr. 32: 30); the mention of the City of David as adjacent to the pool of Shelah (or Shiloah; cf. Isa. 8: 6), and the 'king's garden' in Neh. 3: 15, and the position of the Fountain Gate in this passage and Neh. 12: 37; and the statement that Manasseh built 'an outer wall to the City of David, on the west side of Gihon' in the *nahal*, i. e., the Kidron valley (2 Chr. 33: 14).

The name appears to have had a wider significance as the city grew. Originally 'City of David' was only the name of the Jebusite fort, but later it has become equivalent to the whole southeastern hill.⁶

In later times Zion and Jerusalem came to be used interchangeably, but this was not the case in the early history of this city. The facts have been well stated:

It is evident that Zion was the name of the citadel of the Jebusite city of Jerusalem. That this citadel and incidentally the then city of Jerusalem around it were on the long ridge running south of the Temple is now accepted by almost all modern scholars, mainly on the following grounds:

(1) The near proximity of the site to the only known spring, now the 'Virgin's Fount,' once called Gihon. . . .

(2) The suitability of the site for defense. The sites suited for settlement in early Canaanitish times were all, if we may judge from a

⁶ E. W. G. Masterman in *The International Standard Bible Encyclopædia*, p. 1601.

number of them now known, of this nature—a rocky spur isolated on three sides by steep valleys, and, in many sites, protected at the end where they join the main mountain ridge by either a valley or a rocky spur.

(3) The size of the ridge, though very small to our modern ideas, is far more in keeping with what we know of fortified towns of that period than such an area as presented by the southwestern hill—the traditional site of Zion. Mr. Macalister found by actual excavation that the great walls of Gezer, which must have been contemporaneous with the Jebusite Jerusalem, measured approximately 4,500 feet in circumference. G. A. Smith has calculated that a line of wall carried along the known and inferred scarps around the edge of this southeastern hill would have an approximate circumference of 4,250 feet. The suitability of the site to a fortified city like Gezer, Megiddo, Soco, and other cities which have been excavated, strikes anyone familiar with these places.

(4) The archeological evidence on these hills found by Warren and Professor Guthe, and more particularly in the recent excavations of Captain Parker, show without doubt that this was the earliest settlement in pre-Israelite times. Extensive curves and rock-cuttings, cave-dwellings and tombs, and enormous quantities of early 'Amorite' (what may properly be called 'Jebusite') pottery show that the spot must have been inhabited many centuries before the time of David. The reverse is equally true; on no other part of the Jerusalem site has any quantity of such early pottery been found.

(5) The Bible evidence that Zion originally occupied this site is clear.⁷

Again have the explorers uncovered the facts which correct the theories of former writers and confirm the accuracy of the Bible record. Again it has been demonstrated that the writers of the Scriptures were so guided by the Spirit of wisdom that their documents are found to be free from error wherever they are capable of historical confirmation, and this fact should encourage confidence in those portions of the Scriptures which deal with purely spiritual truth and are therefore incapable of confirmation by archeology.

⁷ *Id.*, pp. 3150, 3151.

XVI

THE FORTUNES OF JUDAH AND ISRAEL

So to delineate the outward events of the Old and New Testament as that they should come home with a new power to those who by long familiarity have almost ceased to regard them as historical truth at all; so to bring out their inward spirit that the more complete realization of their outward form should not degrade, but exalt, the faith of which they are the vehicle—this indeed would be an object worthy of all the labor which travelers and theologians have ever bestowed on the East.—DEAN STANLEY.

THE period between the division of the Hebrew monarchy in the tenth century B. C. and the captivity of Judah in Babylon in the sixth century supplies more archeological evidence than any previous period. "Omri and Ahab are named in a contemporary Moabite inscription. In particular, Assyria, from the ninth century B. C., enters into more direct relations with Israel and Judah than (as far as we know) she had done previously. It was the most brilliant period of Assyrian history; and the kings of Nineveh, in their almost annual military expeditions, often came into hostile contact with the peoples of western Asia: they had thus in their inscriptions frequent occasion to mention by name the kings of Israel or Judah, or to notice public events recorded in the Old Testament. More than this, the information which the monuments supply of the movements and policy of the Assyrian kings not infrequently sheds a valuable light upon the writings of the prophets, and throws a new meaning into their words." "It is becoming increasingly evident that the Old Testament in all its elements—literary, historical, and religious—cannot be adequately understood without relating them to the history of the peoples round about Israel, and especially to that of the Babylonians and Assyrians, who exercised so potent and permanent an influence upon the fortunes and the thought of the Chosen People."

From the time when Babylon came under the domination of Assyria until it was captured by Cyrus in 538 B. C. a number of the kings, both the kings of Assyria and the independent rulers of the Neo-Babylonian empire, are mentioned in the Old

Testament. The activities of these monarchs in restoring and adding to the greatness of this ancient but now perished city have been briefly summarized by one who has seen the extensive ruins with his own eyes:

When the Assyrian kings ruled over Babylon they repaired mainly the great temple of Esagila, now under Amran, where the pavements of Esarhaddon (680-668 B. C.) and Sardanapalus (668-626 B. C.) still lie. Sennacherib (705-681 B. C.) had caused the Procession Street near Sachn to be paved.

On the Kasr, Sargon (710-705 B. C.) built the wall of the Southern Citadel, with the rounded corner tower. Sardanapalus restored Ninitti-Bel lying close to our point of observation, Homera, and Emach on the Kasr. At that time the great extension of the Southern Citadel itself was not built, nor yet that part of the Kasr that lay to the north of it, the mound of Babil and the outer city wall. All that belongs to the building period of the Neo-Babylonian kingdom (625-538 B. C.)

Nabopolassar (625-604 B. C.) began with the western part of the Southern Citadel, built the Arachtu wall from the Kasr as far as Amran, and also the temple of Ninib, and Imgur-Bel on the Kasr.

With Nebuchadnezzar (604-561 B. C.) began the colossal rebuilding of the entire city, with the restoration of the temple of Emach on the Citadel of Esagila, of Etemenanki, the tower of Babylon with its wide temenos sacred precinct, of the Ninib-temple in Ishin aswad, of temple 'Z' and the earlier Ishtar temple in Merkes. He restored the Arachtu wall, constructed the earliest stone bridge over the Euphrates at Amran, the canal Libil-higalla, that flowed round the Kasr on the north, east, and south, completed the Southern Citadel with his palace, and enlarged it toward the north in three successive extensions, in which the Procession Street was heightened and paved with stone, and the Ishtar gate acquired its latest form, while both were decorated with the colored enamelled frieze of animals. He built a new castle far out on the north and surrounded the city which he had enlarged in this fashion with the great outer city wall, of which from Homera we can see the white chain of mounds on the eastern horizon.

Of Nabonidus (555-538 B. C.) we have more especially the strong fortification wall on the banks of the Euphrates, that has been excavated from Kasr to the Urash gate, near the bridge at Amran and the Ishtar temple in Merkes. . . .

When we gaze today over the wide area of ruins we are involuntarily reminded of the words of the prophet of Jeremiah (50: 39): 'Therefore the wild beasts of the desert, with the wild beasts of the islands, shall dwell there, and the owls shall dwell therein: and it shall be no more inhabited forever; neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation.'¹

¹ *The Excavations at Babylon*, pp. 312-314. By Robert Koldewey. The Macmillan Company.

The excavations which have been made on the site of ancient Babylon, have demonstrated beyond the shadow of a doubt that the kings of the East mentioned in the Old Testament are actual historical persons, and have provided a historical background upon which the contemporary writings found in the Scriptures may profitably be projected.

One fact which had a marked influence upon the later history of the people of God should not be forgotten. Solomon, noted for his wisdom and the builder of the most celebrated temple for the worship of the true God, marred his record by introducing the worship of foreign gods. "Then did Solomon build a high place for Chemosh the abomination of Moab, in the mount that is before Jerusalem, and for Molech the abomination of the children of Ammon. And so he did for all his foreign wives, who burnt incense and sacrificed unto their gods." This apostasy was the direct cause of the division of the kingdom, and led to the practice of idolatry both in Israel and in Judah until the time of the captivity of both nations. The result of this separation from God was national weakness which was manifested in repeated defeats at the hands of their enemies, some of which were recorded in the inscriptions of the victorious kings. Here is one instance:

During the reign of Rehoboam, we read (1 Kings 14: 25, 26), Shishak, king of Egypt, invaded Judah, and carried away a considerable amount of treasure from Jerusalem. Shishak is manifestly the Egyptian Shashanq, a Libyan, the founder of the twenty-second dynasty. No detailed account of this expedition has come down to us,—perhaps because only fragments of the annals of Shashanq have been preserved: but there exists an interesting relief on the outer southern wall of the temple of Amen at Karnak, representing the colossal figure of Shashanq dealing out blows to his conquered foes, while behind him are paraded in long rows the names of a hundred and fifty-six subjugated towns and districts, each enclosed in a *cartouche* surmounted by the head of a captive. The first nine names are those of various foreign peoples, which conventionally head the lists of Egyptian conquests. Of the names which follow, some are destroyed and of the rest the identifications are in many cases uncertain, the places referred to being often, it seems, insignificant ones, not named in the Old Testament. A tolerable number, however, are clear, as 11 Gaza, 13 Rabbith in Issachar (Josh. 19: 20), 14 Taanach, 15 Shunem (2 Kings 4: 8), 18 Hapharaim in Issachar (Josh. 19: 19), 22 Mahanaim on the east of Jordan, 23 Gibeon, 24 Beth-horon, 26 Aijalon, 27 Makkedah (Josh. 10: 10), 29 Iaoudhammelouk, 'Yehud of the king,' in Dan (Josh. 19: 45,

—now *el-Yahudiyyeh*), 37 Keilah and 38 Socho, both in the lowland of Judah (Josh. 15: 44, 35; 1 Sam. 17: 1), 65 Ezem (Josh. 15: 29), 108 Arad, about sixteen miles south of Hebron (Num. 21: 1), 124 Beth-anoth (Josh. 15: 59).²

It appears that "so long as Solomon lived and Israel was united Shashanq did not venture to attack; but when the kingdom was rent in twain, he deemed that a favorable opportunity had come to carry out his designs." Another brief paragraph dealing with this matter may be of interest:

The principal event in the reign of Shashanq [Shishak of 1 Kings 14: 25; 2 Chr. 12: 5, 7, 9] was the invasion of Palestine and capture of Jerusalem. He spoiled the temple, and carried off much gold and silver, and took away the bucklers and shields of Solomon, and also the golden quivers which David had taken from the king of Zobah. He gave Jeroboam, king of Judah, one of his daughters to wife. On his return to Egypt he caused a record of his campaign to be cut upon the second pylon of the temple of Karnak, and added a list of all the towns and villages which he had conquered in Palestine. Among them are the names of many places familiar from the Bible narrative.³

A brief reference is made to this invasion by Shishak in a history of this period by a modern writer:

One event occurred early in Jeroboam's reign, to which only a passing allusion is made in the books of Kings and Chronicles in connection with Jerusalem, though in reality it affected the Northern as well as the Southern kingdom. The fact that the sacred history makes no further mention of the invasion of Palestine by Shishak, king of Egypt, than to relate how the treasury of the temple and palace at Jerusalem were despoiled and that Solomon's golden shields were removed, is a proof that the sacred authors have omitted to record many important historical facts as not bearing on their subject. From Shishak's inscription in the court of the great temple of Amen at Karnak, it appears that not only Judah suffered from this invasion, but Israel was ravaged as far as the Plain of Esdraelon. It is noteworthy that among 133 names of places, that of Jerusalem does not appear.⁴

Interesting and significant references to some of the kings of

² *Authority and Archæology Sacred and Profane*, pp. 87, 88. Edited by David G. Hogarth. John Murray, London.

³ *A General Introductory Guide to the Egyptian Collections in the British Museum*, p. 377. New Edition, Revised and Enlarged, 1930.

⁴ *The Biblical History of the Hebrews*, p. 227. By F. J. Foakes-Jackson. W. Heffer & Sons, Cambridge.

Old Testament history are found in different inscriptions which have been discovered. Thus we read concerning one whose name has become familiar in a modern proverb:

Jehu, who overthrew the dynasty founded by Omri (2 Kings 9, 10), is mentioned twice by Shalmaneser II. The first passage occurs on the famous Black Obelisk, found at Nimroud (the site of the ancient Calach) by Sir Henry Layard, and now a conspicuous object in the Nimroud Central Salon of the British Museum. This obelisk, in its upper part, is decorated with five tiers of bas-reliefs, and in its lowest part is covered with a cuneiform inscription of 190 lines, recounting the chief events of thirty-one years of Shalmaneser's reign. Each tier of bas-reliefs represents the tribute brought to the Assyrian king by nations whom he had either subjugated or who sought his favor. The second tier depicts a prince or deputy prostrating himself before Shalmaneser, and followed by attendants bearing offerings. The superscription reads:

'Tribute of Jehu, son of Khumri [Omri]: silver, gold, a golden bowl, a golden ladle, golden goblets, golden pitchers, lead, a staff for the hand of the king, shafts of spears I received.'

The tribute-bearers are bearded, and wear long-fringed robes: their strongly marked Jewish physiognomy is very noticeable.

The title 'Jehu the son of Omri,' is remarkable. Jehu, in point of fact, overthrew the dynasty (Omri, Ahab, Ahaziah, Jehoram), which Omri had founded: but Omri seems to have been a more important ruler than the brief notice of his reign in the book of Kings (1 Kings 16: 23, 24) would lead us to suspect: his choice of Samaria as his capital shows that he had the eye of a military leader: and that he (or his dynasty) enjoyed, from whatever cause, a reputation abroad, appears clearly from the fact that 'the land of the house of Omri' or 'the land of Omri,' is the standing Assyrian designation of the Northern Kingdom. The mistake of the Assyrian scribe in calling Jehu Omri's son is thus readily explained.

Jehu is mentioned again in another inscription of Shalmaneser's, in which he writes:

'In the eighteenth year of my reign [842 B. C.] I crossed the Euphrates the sixteenth time. . . . At that time I received the tribute of the Tyrians, of the Sidonians, and of Jehu, the son of Omri.' . . .

About half a century later, we again read of Israel being tributary to the Assyrians. Ramman-nirari III (812-783 B. C.), after enumerating other countries subjugated by him, writes:

'From the Euphrates to the land Hatti [the Hittites], the West Country in its entire compass, Tyre, Zidon, the land Omri, Edom, Philistia, as far as the great sea of the sun-setting, I subjected to my yoke.' . . .

The reign of Ramman-nirari synchronized with the reign of Jehoash (c. 802-726 B. C.) and the early part of the reign of Jeroboam II in Israel (c. 786-746 B. C.); and the facts mentioned in this inscription

enable us to understand the successes gained by these two kings against Damascus (2 Kings 13: 14-19, 25; 14: 28): the Syrians were at that time weakened by the victories of Ramman-nirari.⁵

In the sixteenth chapter of Second Kings we read of a conspiracy formed between "Rezin king of Syria and Pekah son of Remaliah king of Israel" against Ahaz king of Judah, in consequence of which "Ahaz sent messengers to Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria" with a liberal present, seeking help from him. "And the king of Assyria hearkened unto him; and the king of Assyria went up against Damascus the capital of Syria, and took it, and carried the people of it captive to Kir, and slew Rezin."

Tablets have been found which contain the annals of Tiglath-pileser, dealing with his various campaigns. One tablet records his expedition against the king of Israel, in response to the urgent entreaty of Ahaz, and from it this extract is taken:

The land Beth-Omri . . . the whole of its inhabitants and their goods I carried away to Assyria. . . Pekah their king I slew. Hoshea I appointed to the sovereignty over them. Ten talents of gold, a thousand talents of silver, together with their . . . I received from them and brought them away [to Assyria].

While this inscription corroborates in a general way the main fact of the successful campaign of Tiglath-pileser against the king of Israel, as found in the Bible, yet there is one discrepancy between them which is worthy of attention:

As the campaign of 734 B. C. swept onwards into Philistia, a revolution seems to have taken place in Samaria. The Assyrian party, we may suppose, got the upper hand; Pekah was assassinated by Hoshea, and the usurper had his claim confirmed by Tiglath-pileser. In this way we may reconcile the statement of the Assyrian king, that he slew Pekah and put Hoshea in his place, with the record in 2 Kings 15: 30 that 'Hoshea the son of Elah made a conspiracy against Pekah the son of Remaliah, and smote him, and slew him, and reigned in his stead.'⁶

In the first half of the eighth century B. C. the prophet Amos,

⁵ *Authority and Archaeology Sacred and Profane*, pp. 94-96. Edited by David G. Hogarth. John Murray, London.

⁶ *The Book of Isaiah in the Light of the Assyrian Monuments*, p. 63. By Charles Boutflower. The Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge, London.

whose home was in the Southern Kingdom, received a divine commission to pronounce warning messages to the representatives of the Northern Kingdom, and he journeyed thither for that purpose. His announcement that Jehovah "will rise against the house of Jeroboam with the sword," stirred the priest Amaziah to say, "O thou seer, go, flee thou away into the land of Judah, and there eat bread, and prophesy there." This drew forth from the prophet the definite prediction of the utter overthrow of Israel: "Therefore thus saith Jehovah: Thy wife shall be a harlot in the city, and thy sons and thy daughters shall fall by the sword, and thy land shall be divided by line; and thou thyself shalt die in a land that is unclean, and Israel shall surely be led away captive out of his land." We are indebted to archeology for the definite testimony which confirms the fulfilment of these words of the prophet:

Sargon (722-705 B. C.) is mentioned in the Old Testament only once, incidentally (Isa. 20: 1), as besieging Ashdod, and so affording the occasion for a short prophecy of Isaiah's. From his annals we learn that his reign was an eventful one, full of military achievements, and that it lasted for seventeen years. The revolt of Ashdod, which led to the siege mentioned by Isaiah, took place in his eleventh year. But, as Rawlinson was able to point out in 1851, he gives us more interesting information than this. From the Book of Kings we should suppose that it was Shalmaneser who, after a three years' siege, took Samaria, and carried Israel into exile in Assyria; but from the annals of Sargon we learn that this was not the case: the capture of Samaria was one of the first successes of Sargon's reign, and he gives us particulars about it:

'The city of Samaria I besieged, I took; . . . 27,290 of its inhabitants I carried into captivity, fifty of their chariots I seized . . .; people from all lands, my captives, I settled there; my officers I appointed governors over them; tribute and dues I exacted of them.'

The statement that people from other places were settled by Sargon in Samaria agrees with 2 Kings 17: 24.⁷

The site of the ancient capital of the kingdom of Israel has been identified and explored in recent times. Some of the valuable results are thus described:

In 1909 excavations [at Samaria] were resumed on May 31, and continued until November 14. As in 1908, the chief interest centered

⁷ *Modern Research as Illustrating the Bible*, p. 18. By S. R. Driver. Oxford University Press.

round the summit; a wall was discovered which Reisner at the time believed to be part of the Palace of Omri and Ahab, while Père Vincent, a leading authority on Palestinian archeology, shared the same opinion. In a chamber beneath the palace several fragments of pottery inscribed in Hebrew were found, while south of the palace a fragment of cuneiform inscription with a Hebrew seal stamp was brought to light; traces of an ancient Hebrew tower were also discovered, and the remains of the wall of the ancient Israelite city were found on the edge of the lower terrace, the western gateway of the city being at the same time discovered.

But the excavations of 1910 are those which have produced by far the most important and the most positive results, so far as Hebrew history is concerned, and have effected the identification of the architectural remains of Omri and his notorious son Ahab. On archeological grounds the excavators had already assigned the remains in question to the period of Israel's hey-day, and the discovery of an alabaster vase inscribed with the name of Osorkon II, confirmed their opinion. Osorkon, King of Egypt, was the contemporary of Shalmaneser II, King of Assyria (860-825 B. C.), and was, therefore, the contemporary of Ahab, whose relationship to Shalmaneser has already been discussed. This discovery is of supreme value owing to the disturbance of the site in successive periods and the consequent difficulty of assigning dates to all that the excavations have brought to light.⁸

In the case of Sargon we have another impressive illustration of the reliability of the Holy Scriptures, even where the historical references may be only incidental. In the first verse of the twentieth chapter of Isaiah we read of an event which happened "in the year that Tartan came unto Ashdod, when Sargon the king of Assyria sent him." No historian made a record of the reign of Sargon, and no other mention of him is made in the Bible. Was the prophet historically correct in referring to him as "the king of Assyria"? Certainly he was. "The name Sargon will for ever testify to the trustworthiness of the Book of Isaiah, seeing that for long centuries the very existence of this king was known only from Isa. 20: 1. Strangely enough the splendid palace of Sargon in the mound of Khorsabad was destined to be the first Assyrian palace laid bare before the eyes of us moderns. The fall of Samaria was the first event in the reign of Sargon." (Boutflower.)

Hezekiah, king of Judah, was contemporary with Hoshea, the last king of Israel, for about seven of the ten years of his reign.

⁸ *The Latest Light on Bible Lands*, pp. 252, 253. By P. S. P. Handcock. The Macmillan Company.

"Now in the fourteenth year of king Hezekiah did Sennacherib king of Assyria come up against all the fortified cities of Judah, and took them." At one time during Sennacherib's campaign he made the city of Lachish his headquarters, and so we read that "the king of Assyria sent Tartan and Rabсарis and Rabshakeh from Lachish to King Hezekiah with a great army unto Jerusalem." Explorers have made noteworthy efforts to locate the ancient city of Lachish, and while there is not perfect agreement concerning the result of these efforts, yet there seem to be substantial reasons for adopting the conclusion which has been accepted by some leading archeologists. "Before Bliss began at Jerusalem, Petrie in 1890 was sent by the Palestine Exploration Fund from Egypt to Palestine to search for the situation of Lachish. This he located at Tell-el-Hesi, about thirty miles southwest of Jerusalem and fourteen miles from the sea." A brief paragraph by a well-known writer deals with this matter:

In all probability Tell-el-Hesi is the site of the ancient Lachish. The name is not the same; but Lachish is known to have been a fortress; the situation would suit; and the manner in which Zimrida, who we know was governor of Lachish, is mentioned on the tablet found at Tell-el-Hesi, makes it highly probable that it was Lachish. In the Old Testament Lachish is first mentioned as a place taken by Joshua (Josh. 10: 31f.). It is next mentioned in the Chronicles (2 Chron. 11: 9) as a place built, i. e., fortified, by Rehoboam. When Sennacherib invaded Judah in 701, Lachish was one of the many fortified cities in Judah which he took (2 Kings 18: 13, 14); and there is an interesting bas-relief now in the British Museum, representing the Assyrian King seated on his throne, and receiving the submission of Jewish captives, with the inscription 'Sennacherib, king of multitudes, king of Assyria, seats himself upon a lofty throne, and receives the spoil of the city of Lachish.' If Tell-el-Hesi be really Lachish, it would be the strong walls of City VI (10-12 feet thick) which the Assyrian king succeeded in forcing. Sennacherib made the captured fortress for some time his headquarters: Hezekiah's envoys came thither with large presents to ask of him terms of peace: and thence it was that he dispatched Rabshakeh to demand the surrender of Jerusalem (2 Kings 18: 14-16, 17ff.). A century later (Jer. 34: 7) it is mentioned as one of the fortresses attacked by Nebuchadnezzar.⁹

While it would interest us greatly if we could look with our own eyes upon the ruins of this city so often mentioned in Old

⁹ *Modern Research as Illustrating the Bible*, pp. 45, 46. By S. R. Driver. Oxford University Press.

Testament history, yet it is indeed a privilege to be able to view them through the eyes of an actual observer. From such an one we gather these facts:

Petrie found a fragment of a wall inside that of Jehoshaphat which may have been built by Uzziah about 800 B. C. This wall soon after had been intentionally destroyed, very probably by Rezin and Pekah in 735 during their fruitless siege of Jerusalem (2 Kings 16: 5): but was immediately replaced by another city wall, probably by Ahaz, who made also the flight of stone steps leading up to the city on the south side of this fortification. The stones of the building near these steps have drafted edges like Ahab's masonry at Samaria, with a rough boss in the center, but the drafting is smooth, and shows no mark of a finely toothed edge, comb-pick, or 'claw-tool.' The only dressing mark is the long stroke of a pointed pick 'like the marks on the fort of Tell-es-Safi (Gath) and on the first building of the Beit el Khulil near Hebron.' The city wall itself was of brick.

Behind this wall of Ahaz is the foundation of a thicker wall on the north side of the city, which had also been ruined soon after it was built.

On the south side also there is a long sloping glacis, 30 feet broad, made of blocks of stone imbedded in the earth and covered with white plaster, which had apparently been a hastily constructed defence, the wall on top being very small, and this wall, too, had been very soon broken down, 'razed to the ground.'

Petrie connects these rapid vicissitudes in the history of Lachish with Sennacherib's invasion in 701 B. C. Hezekiah had probably hastily repaired the fortifications when fighting the Philistines (2 Kings 18: 8), or in preparation for Sennacherib's invasion, as he did at Jerusalem (2 Chron. 32: 3-5). The site shows that Lachish was badly destroyed by Sennacherib. . . .

Lachish has thus had a troubled history, much like Jerusalem itself; but why so excellent a site should have been totally abandoned so early, it is difficult to say.

If Petrie is correct in his identifications, the correspondence between the mound's own story and the narrative of the Old Testament is marvellously complete. Even if the identifications be not all accurately timed, the two stories are practically the same. We have got an historical background of fact to all that the Old Testament says of Lachish.¹⁰

The Biblical account of this memorable campaign is both supplemented and corroborated by Sennacherib's own account of his military operations. His record is written in the usual boastful style of the kings of his time, and yet it is a record of facts.

¹⁰ *Digging Up Biblical History*, pp. 171, 172. By J. Garrow Duncan. The Macmillan Company.

It is found on the so-called Taylor cylinder, discovered in Kuyunjik in 1830 by J. E. Taylor, British Vice-Consul at Bas-sora and now in the British Museum. That portion of it which deals with King Hezekiah is here presented:

But Hezekiah of Judah, who had not submitted to my yoke—forty-six of his fenced cities and fortresses, and small towns in their vicinity without number, by breaking them down with battering rams, and the blows of . . . and the strokes of axes and hammers, I besieged and took; 200,150 persons, small and great, male and female, horses, mules, asses, camels, large cattle, small cattle without number, I brought forth from the midst of them, and counted as spoil. As for Hezekiah himself, like a bird in a cage, in Jerusalem, his royal city, I shut him up. I threw up forts against him, and whoever would come out of the gate of the city I turned back. His cities, which I had spoiled, I cut off from his land, and gave them to Mitinti, king of Ashdod, Padi, king of Ekron, Zilbel, king of Gaza, and so made small his territory. To the former tribute, the gifts payable each year, the presents due to my sovereignty, I made an addition and imposed it upon him [them]. As for Hezekiah himself, the fear of the glory of my sovereignty overwhelmed him; and the Arabs and his other allies, whom he had brought to strengthen Jerusalem, the city of his royal residence, deserted him. Thirty talents of gold, and eight hundred talents of silver, . . . great stores of lapis-lazuli, couches of ivory, arm-chairs of ivory [covered!] with elephant's hide, ivory tusks, *ussu* wood, *urkarinu* wood, and the like, an immense treasure; and his daughters, his palace-women, men-singers, women-singers, to Nineveh, my royal city, I made him bring; and for the delivery of the tribute, he sent his ambassador.¹¹

It is significant that on this cylinder there is no record of the capture of Jerusalem by Sennacherib, or of the sudden disaster which befell his army, according to the Biblical record (2 Kings 19: 35, 36). This is quite in harmony with the spirit of these ancient monarchs, who gloried in their successful campaigns, but passed over in silence their defeats.

We have in this chapter taken a hasty glance at some of the archeological records for an important period of ancient history covering between two and three centuries, and we have found some striking confirmations of various historical records in the Scriptures. We have entered an era in which the testimony of archeology is more abundant, and we shall pursue our study with increasing interest.

¹¹ *The Monuments and the Old Testament*, pp. 182, 183. By Ira Maurice Price. The American Baptist Publication Society.

XVII

NINEVEH FALLS AND BABYLON ARISES

There is scarcely a point of contact between Bible and Assyrian history which does not receive some illustration from the monuments.

—JAMES ORR.

SOME of the simple narratives of the Scriptures have made an indelible impression upon the mind of the world. Among them is an experience in the time of Hezekiah king of Judah. "One of the most striking instances recorded in Holy Scripture of the interruption, or rather reversal, of the working of a natural law is the going back of the shadow on the dial of Ahaz at the time of Hezekiah's recovery from his illness." Every reader of the Bible remembers this story. It is not at all surprising that Merodach-baladan, king of Babylon, heard of Hezekiah's sickness and remarkable recovery. The priests of Babylon were "the star gazers, the monthly prognosticators," and as the sun was their clock, they would of course be aroused to inquire for the cause when their clock appeared to go backward instead of forward. Thus they learned that it was due to the act of the God of Jerusalem as the sign of His healing power which was promised and fulfilled to Hezekiah, whose life was prolonged fifteen years. So the ambassadors from Babylon were sent unto him "to inquire of the wonder that was done in the land."

The historical setting of this singular event is of interest, and may give greater significance to it. Sargon was king of Assyria 722-705 B. C. His first military exploit was the completion of the siege of Samaria commenced by Shalmaneser IV, and the capture of that city. Just at this juncture Babylon, then under the rule of Assyria, was seized by Merodach-baladan and held for about twelve years. Hezekiah was the contemporary of Merodach-baladan for about six years, 715-709 B. C., just at the time when this king was seeking to form alliances with some of the rulers who were vassals of the king of Assyria, with the hope of securing aid to make his own kingdom secure. While the going back

of the shadow on the dial of Ahaz may have aroused the curiosity of the usurper at Babylon, yet the almost inevitable interpretation of his sending the ambassadors is that he was seeking a political benefit. However that may be, there is another view of the matter which is of greater importance to the student who is watching to take note of the purpose of God in history. "God is either in all human history, or in none," and we may well observe His working here.

It has always been the purpose of God to proclaim the gospel of His grace to all peoples, and He chose the children of Abraham, to whom the promise of the blessing was made, as His special instrument for accomplishing this purpose. When they attempted to shut up the blessing to themselves by failing to be a missionary agency to the whole world, before He sent them to the center of heathenism as captives to convey His message, the God of heaven demonstrated to the ruler of Babylon His own superiority to the sun-god of paganism in such a remarkable manner as led to an official inquiry, and so the way was opened for Hezekiah to send to Babylon the good news of the life-giving God who had saved him from death. But what did the king of Judah do? Instead of humbly showing them the eternal riches of the kingdom of God, he boastfully showed them the comparatively worthless riches of his own kingdom. This marked failure to coöperate with the signal act of God drew from the prophet Isaiah the first definite prediction of the captivity of Judah in Babylon. This climax of neglect to accept their duty and to enjoy their privilege came in the time of Merodach-baladan, king of Babylon, when Assyria was the ruling power in the political world and Babylon could not maintain her revolt from the place of a vassal, but He who knows the end from the beginning foresaw the downfall of Assyria and the rise of the New Babylon, whose ambition for power would lead to the conquest of Palestine and the captivity of Judah. And so it came to pass. The testimony which they did not bear to Babylon as a free people they were compelled to bear as a captive people when they sat down by the rivers of Babylon and wept as they remembered Zion and the wonderful temple of Solomon. And this experience contains a valuable lesson for today.

But what about this king Merodach-baladan? Is there any testimony concerning him independent of the Biblical record?

The history of his time is so fully outlined in the documents and inscriptions of the various kings that the historicity of the different rulers of that period mentioned in the Scriptures is thoroughly established. Merodach-baladan was of royal descent, as is shown by reliable documents:

In the Assyrian inscriptions Merodach-baladan is described as the 'son,' *i. e.*, descendant or successor, of 'Yakin:' and his kingdom is called Bit-Yakin 'the house of Yakin:' and his capital, Dur-Yakin 'the fortress of Yakin.' These names are taken from a certain Yakin, the founder of his royal line, who was a contemporary of Shalmaneser III of Assyria. In the inscription on the Gates of Balawat Shalmaneser states that he marched to the sea-coast, viz. in 851 B. C., and received tribute of Yakin the king of 'the Country of the Sea.' *Mat Tamtim*, 'the Country of the Sea,' is another name for Bit-Yakin, which we often meet with in the cuneiform records. It was the most southerly of the Chaldean states, and lay at the head of the Persian Gulf.¹

About 709 B. C. Sargon, king of Assyria, drove Merodach-baladan out of Babylon after he had maintained his revolt for twelve years. As to his later experience we read:

During the remaining four or five years of Sargon's reign we hear no more of Merodach-baladan, but with the accession of Sennacherib in 705 B. C. this persistent antagonist was able a second time to seat himself upon the throne of Babylon for six, or more probably, nine months. Hence it came to pass that Sennacherib's first campaign in 703 was directed against 'Marduk-apal-iddina, king of Karduniash [the district around Babylon], a rebel at heart, seditious, bent on revolt, whose guilt is heavy.' On this occasion Merodach-baladan by rich gifts had secured the help of the king of Elam, who sent him an army of 80,000 bowmen, under his two 'tartans' and ten commanders. He had also, according to Sennacherib, mustered all the Chaldeans, the Arameans, and the whole of Karduniash, together with an Arab contingent under the brother of the Arabian queen. Very vividly does Sennacherib describe the spirit in which he went to the encounter; how he 'raged like a lion,' and 'like a mighty bull' went on ahead of his army. The great battle was fought at Kish to the east of Babylon, and resulted in a victory for the Assyrians. Merodach-baladan's palace at Babylon with all its treasures fell into the hands of the conqueror, but the Chaldean himself found a hiding place in the marshes, and once more baffled his pursuers. . . .

In 700 B. C., the year after his campaign in Judah, Sennacherib made

¹ *The Book of Isaiah in the Light of the Assyrian Monuments*, p. 134. By Charles Boutflower. The Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge, London.

a second expedition against Merodach-baladan, and it is quite possible that the 'rumor,' which according to Jehovah's promise would cause him to return to his own land, was the rumor of some fresh intrigues and activities on the part of his indefatigable rival. On his way to Bit-Yakin Sennacherib overthrew 'Shuzub the Chaldean, who dwelt in the marshes,' a prince who like Merodach-baladan was destined to give further trouble. Before the Assyrian could reach the land of his foe, to use an expression very like his own, 'the bird was flown.' 'Merodach-baladan, whose overthrow I had accomplished in the course of my first campaign and had shattered his forces, feared the thunder of my mighty arms and the onset of my terrible battle. He gathered together the gods of his whole land, embarked them on ships, and fled like a bird to Nagite-rakki, which is in the midst of the sea.' We are then told how the Chaldean had left behind him on the shore his brothers and the remnant of his subjects, and that Sennacherib carried them off with him after devastating his cities.²

The assassination of Sennacherib by two of his sons in 681 B. C., marked the beginning of the end for the kingdom of Assyria. According to the statement of Isaiah "Esarhaddon his son reigned in his stead." This king did what both Sargon and Sennacherib had failed to do—he made a successful expedition against Egypt, and reduced that kingdom to the condition of an Assyrian province. His own account of this exploit is recorded upon a triumphal stele discovered in 1888:

Tarku king of Egypt and Kush [Ethiopia] from Ishupuri to Memphis, his royal city, a march of fifteen days,—I smote daily in countless numbers his warriors. Himself I attacked five times with the point of the spear in deadly combat. Memphis, his royal city, I laid waste, I burnt it with fire. His children and possessions I carried away to Assyria. The roots of Kush I tore up out of Egypt. Over the whole of Egypt I placed afresh kings, governors, prefects, officers, overseers, regents. The tribute of my sovereignty, [to be paid] yearly without fail.³

The Tarku of this inscription is clearly the Egyptian king Tirhakah mentioned in 2 Kings 19: 9 whose expedition into Palestine compelled Sennacherib to abandon for a time at least his attack upon Jerusalem in the time of Hezekiah, to which reference has already been made. Upon the monolith upon which the inscription is engraved there is sculptured "a colossal figure of Esarhaddon: before him kneel the diminutive figures

² *Id.*, pp. 137, 138.

³ *Authority and Archæology*, p. 111. Edited by David Hogarth. John Murray, London.

of two captive princes, each with a ring passed through his lip (cf. Isa. 37: 29), from which passes a cord, the other end of which is coiled firmly round Esarhaddon's fingers." Thus does Esarhaddon pictorially proclaim himself as lord of Egypt and absolute master of her rulers.

Esarhaddon established a reputation for himself as a restorer of temples. "His crowning achievement in this respect was the reconstruction of the city of Babylon, to the account of which he devotes several inscriptions." This work was accomplished in three years (680-678 B. C.). By the rebuilding of Babylon and the establishment of two capitals in the empire, Babylon and Nineveh, Esarhaddon gave Assyria "a start upon the downward road at the end of which lay sudden and complete destruction." About forty years after the death of Esarhaddon, and only one year after the close of the prosperous reign of his successor, Ashurbanipal, the New Babylonian Empire was established by Nabopolassar in 625 B. C., entirely independent of Assyria, and another fifteen years brought that long dominant empire to extinction.

We are now ready to give attention to the prophecies which predict the capture of Nineveh and the downfall of Assyria. Even in the time of Isaiah the word of Jehovah was, "I will punish the fruit of the stout heart of the king of Assyria, and the glory of his high looks" (Isa. 10: 12). Isaiah was contemporary with Tiglath-pileser III, Shalmaneser IV, Sargon and Sennacherib, when Assyria was at the height of its power, but even then in the mind of Jehovah punishment awaited it. It was, however, by the prophets Nahum and Zephaniah that the doom of Assyria and the terrible judgment upon Nineveh were foretold in a very definite way. More complete than the message of Zephaniah and "vibrant to the impending fall of Assyria" are the words of Nahum. Note this vivid translation of the first part of the second chapter of his prophecy:

*Woe to the city of blood,
All of her guile, robbery-full, ceaseless rapine!
Hark the whip
And the rumbling of wheels!
Horses at the gallop,
And the rattling dance of the chariot!
Cavalry at the charge,
Flash of sabres, and lightning of lances!*

In harmony with the usual custom of the period, according to which each king, swelling with pride, glorified himself in his records of his successes but usually passed over his defeats in silence, the last Assyrian kings did not print upon tablets any account of their gradual weakening and final downfall. This was left for others to do. We are indebted to the scribes of New Babylon for such a record. The facts have been gathered from this source and put into readable form by a recent writer from whom we take this rather lengthy but interesting extract:

The records of Assyria fail completely about twenty-five years before the end, for Eastern monarchs are not in the habit of proclaiming their reverses, and Assyria had had little else to record since that time. Among all those who were present as besiegers there was only one people capable of preserving the tradition in writing. The Medes and Scythians were little better than barbarians, and it is therefore to the Babylonians that all the sources eventually lead back. Berossus himself was a native Babylonian priest; Herodotus and Ktesias were alike dependent upon what their informants had read upon clay tablets or heard from the mouths of those who were learned in the scribal art.

A fortunate chance has now enabled us to look back beyond the earliest of these traditions, and has given us one of the original documents upon which they were based. A clay tablet, now in the British Museum, is inscribed with a chronicle which summarizes in order of years, months and days the chief events during eight years of the reign of Nabopolassar, King of Babylon, and leader of the Babylonian forces in the siege of Nineveh. Welcome as this wealth of completely new information would be in any case for the light it sheds upon a period otherwise totally obscure, it is doubly so in that it happens to include the year in which Nineveh was captured and destroyed, and thereby furnishes the exact date of that event which has hitherto been a matter of conjecture. The chronology of this period is well established, and therefore, when the chronicle tells us that Nineveh fell in the fourteenth year of Nabopolassar, we can say at once that, in our system, this is 612 B. C. and that in consequence the generally accepted date (606 B. C.) is six years too late. But this is by no means the full extent of the revelations which this document has for us. Beginning with the tenth year of Nabopolassar (616 B. C.) it reveals Assyria beset on all sides by enemies, and gradually sinking under their convergent attacks in a series of battles and sieges even while she is yet capable of shrewd blows in her own defence. The southern provinces are the first to go, and her enemies close in upon the home cities. Then comes the end, or what should have been the end; Nineveh is captured and destroyed. But even when death was thus at the heart of the great Assyrian Empire, its strongest limb was still vigorous, and the most astonishing fact of all is that the kingdom did not perish

with the king, but was simply transferred to the western provincial capital at Harran, where a new king ascended what was still known as the throne of Assyria. How he endeavored to defend his title and city by the aid of an Egyptian alliance, and how Harran also fell to the attack of the Scythians and Babylonians in the year 610 B. C. may all be read in the subsequent passage of this chronicle. Here, however, it will not be possible to touch upon more than one or two points.

First of all, who were the destroyers of Nineveh? The answer of the chronicle, which is precise, completely confirms tradition upon this point, for it brings upon the scene Nabopolassar of Babylon, Kyaxares the Mede, and the King of the Umman-Manda, or Scythians. Being the work of a Babylonian scribe, it naturally attributes the chief importance to Nabopolassar, but we are inclined to discount this as patriotic rather than candid, when we read that the Babylonians had already suffered one or two serious reverses at the hands of Assyria. There can be little doubt but that Kyaxares, in spite of the chronicle, was the leading figure among the besiegers. It is worth while to point out that the Medes and Babylonians are the protagonists also in the account of Diodorus, while the Scythians are there represented by a so-called 'Bactrian' army which the rebels seduce from its allegiance to Sardanapalus. The version of Herodotus also introduces the same nations, though their mutual relations are somewhat different. Here it is the Scythians who rescue Nineveh from Kyaxares by a sudden and overwhelming attack which brings the siege to a disastrous end. Not until twenty-eight years later, during which the Scythians held undisputed sway, was Kyaxares able to return to the attack, which was at last successful. Such is the version of Herodotus. But what were the facts? The chronicle gives decisive information. It was in 614 B. C. that Kyaxares first attacked, or at least began his final operations against Nineveh. In that year he was unsuccessful against the capital, but gained signal advantages in the capture of the cities of Tarbis and of Ashur. A very curious position is revealed in the following year, 613 B. C., when the chronicle makes no mention of the Medes, but records some minor operations by the Babylonian king against the Assyrian provinces about 'Anah on the Euphrates.' Most significant of all, the Assyrian king is actually able to march down and oppose him, not unsuccessfully in these regions. It is obvious that the siege of Nineveh is for the first time completely in abeyance, and we can only ascribe this respite to the Scythian attack upon the Medes mentioned by Herodotus. But in the next year, 612 B. C., Babylonians, Medes and Scythians all combine for the last and successful assault upon the city. The truth, therefore, lies somewhere between Herodotus and Diodorus. The latter is perfectly right in assigning a three years' duration to the siege, but he misunderstands the part played by the Scythian, or, as he calls it, the Bactrian army. Herodotus, on the other hand, greatly exaggerates the interval between Kyaxares' first defeat and the final success of his attack. Twenty-eight years before 612 B. C., Nineveh was still at the height of her power, in the greatest days of Ashurbanipal.

Some other details of the final scenes which are preserved in the chronicle are of remarkable interest, both in themselves and for comparison with the classical tradition. The siege lasted in 612 B. C. from the month of Sivan to the month of Ab, *i. e.*, from early in June to some time in August. During this period three battles took place before the walls, in which we are to infer that the Assyrians were defeated. These battles duly appear in Diodorus, the first being a night attack upon the defenders, caught for a moment off their guard during a merry-making, and the second two are conflicts on the plain, which end in the total rout of the Assyrians under Galaemenes, the brother-in-law of Sardanapalus. Naturally, however, we are especially curious to see what the chronicle has to say about the fiery end of the profligate king. But here good fortune deserts us for a moment; the text is broken away at the very point where the fate of the monarch was to be recounted. 'At that time,' says the chronicle, 'Sin-shar-ishkun, King of Assyria ——' and there breaks off. Even in this, however, there is some consolation. It is no small gain to have learned that the Ninevite king was actually Sin-shar-ishkun, or Sarakos, as a later Greek historian calls him, not Sardanapalus, which is, of course, only a corrupted version of the name of Ashurbanipal. And, whatever may have been the latter days of that monarch, as to which we know nothing, at least the fame of Sin-shar-ishkun is cleared from the reproach of degeneracy. The last Ninevite king was no besotted sybarite, but a soldier who long and successfully withstood a world of enemies, and a statesman who knew how to convert formerly implacable opponents into faithful allies; a claim substantiated in full by other passages in this chronicle which cannot here be discussed.

That the end of Nineveh and Assyria were synonymous terms would formerly have been considered self-evident. Our chronicle has nothing more astonishing to reveal than that it was not so after all. The account which it gave concerning the capture of Nineveh is somewhat obscured by damage to the text, but it is clear, that in the last encounter, a sortie was made by a body of the defenders, who succeeded in breaking through the ring of the besiegers. A month or two later, while Nabopolassar was still harrying the home provinces of Assyria, we hear that a certain Ashur-uballit 'in the city of Harran sat upon the throne as king of Assyria.' Evidently the remnant which had escaped from Nineveh did not even yet despair of their fortunes.⁴

Every detail of the prophetic account of the destruction of Nineveh as given through Nahum was fulfilled. "The population was to be surprised when unprepared, 'while they are drunk as drunkards they shall be devoured as stubble fully dry' (Nah. 1: 10). Diodorus states that the last and fatal assault was

⁴ *The Fall of Nineveh*, pp. 1-4. By C. J. Gadd. British Museum and Oxford University Press.

made when they were overcome with wine. In the bas-reliefs carousing scenes are represented, in which the king, his courtiers, and even the queen, reclining on couches or seated on thrones, and attended by musicians, appear to be pledging each other in bowls of wine. The captivity of the inhabitants, and their removal to distant provinces, are predicted (3: 18). Their dispersion, which occurred when the city fell, was in accordance with the barbarous custom of the age. The palace-temples were to be plundered of their idols, 'out of the house of thy gods will I cut off the graven image and the molten image' (1: 14), and the city sacked of its wealth: 'Take ye the spoil of silver, take the spoil of gold' (2: 9). For ages the Assyrian edifices have been despoiled of their sacred images; and enormous amounts of gold and silver were, according to tradition, taken to Ecbatana by the conquering Medes. Only one or two fragments of the precious metals were found in the ruins. Nineveh, after its fall, was to be 'empty, and void, and waste' (2: 10); 'it shall come to pass, that all they that look upon thee shall flee from thee, and say, Nineveh is laid waste' (3: 7). These epithets describe the present state of the site of the city."

During the reign of Ashurbanipal and under his personal patronage there came a great revival of learning in the Assyrian capital. Here the influence of Babylon is plainly in evidence, as is shown by this testimony:

We must suppose that the fashionable patronage of Babylonian learning so favored by Esarhaddon led to the employment of many Babylonian teachers, at least among the people of the court and the wealthy magnates. Culture was not confined to the priestly class. The astronomical and astrological knowledge, which was at once the business and the ornament of their profession, is supplemented in the literary monuments of the age by geographical, botanical, and zoological learning, which would naturally be acquired by military attachés, commercial agents, or private travelers. Of this and a manifold culture besides, Ashurbanipal was a munificent and apparently an intelligent patron. Even the official annals, supervised and inspired by himself, in spite of their general adaptation to the monotonous prescriptive form of such documents, reveal in their ornate and polished style and wealth of diction the impress of a wide intellectual movement. These records, however, present their hero as the would-be rival of his great predecessors in the arts of war and government—a rôle in which he appears to signal disadvantage. But the multitudinous tablets which bear his signature, found in the ruins of the great palace at Kuyunjik,

form of themselves a library of varied content which is unique in the history of the human mind. The majority of them, or at least of the originals, were obtained from Babylon. Hence it is to them rather than to monuments found in their proper home, that we owe our knowledge of the ancient Babylonians as a people, their manners and customs, their language and religion, and their varied intellectual treasures.

But the form and mode of this very intellectual relationship with Babylonia betrays, after all, the inherent inefficiency of the Assyrian civilization and political system.⁵

But all this revival of culture from Babylon, the nation which was "mad over idols," did not save Assyria from the fate which inevitably came upon all the nations of antiquity which "refused to have God in their knowledge," and so the prophecy was fulfilled, and Nineveh became "empty, and void, and waste."

We should not overlook the significant fact noted in the extract from C. J. Gadd, that according to the testimony of the clay tablet now in the British Museum, Nineveh fell in 612 B. C., and that "in consequence the generally accepted date (606 B. C.) is six years too late." This corrected date relieves a difficulty which before existed, since in 606, the former year assigned for the overthrow of Nineveh, the forces of Nabopolassar, the king of Babylon, were being used in a campaign against Palestine which resulted in the capture of Jerusalem and the first deportation of Jewish captives, including Daniel and his companions, from Jerusalem to Babylon. At that time it would therefore be difficult for him to coöperate in the destruction of Nineveh, as he did six years earlier. Every fresh archeological discovery thus corroborates more fully the Biblical record, and contributes to the strengthening of confidence in its historical accuracy.

With the fall of Assyria interest now swings to Babylon, the nation which is a central figure in the greatest crisis in the history of God's chosen people, and we must now deal with the testimony of archeology which bears upon this period.

⁵ *History, Prophecy and the Monuments*, Vol. 2, pp. 399, 400. By J. F. McCurdy. The Macmillan Company.

XVIII

NEBUCHADNEZZAR AND DANIEL

Benjamin Jowett once prophesied at Oxford that Christianity was only at the beginning of her greatest triumphs. At the time these words were spoken no one believed them. The higher criticism had captured the strongholds of Old Testament study and it was seriously believed that the Hebrew narratives of patriarch and prophet were written up long after the supposed events had taken place. . . . Today Jowett's prophecy has come true. In the strong language of one of our foremost Assyrian professors, higher criticism is already "bankrupt."

—A. H. T. CLARKE. The Evangelical Quarterly.

THE son and successor of Nabopolassar, the founder of New Babylon, was Nebuchadnezzar. "During his forty-three years of administration (604-561 B. C.) he made Babylon the political, commercial, and religious center of the civilized world." The last three kings of Judah, Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin, and Zedekiah, were his vassals. During the reign of each one of these vassal-kings he conducted a successful campaign in the west, the last one of which brought about the capture and utter destruction of Jerusalem, and the deportation to Babylon of nearly all of its inhabitants who had survived the horrors of the siege.

The book of Daniel, the one book of the Bible which foretells the exact year for the appearance of the Messiah, and concerning which the same Messiah said, "Let him that readeth understand," is almost wholly occupied in dealing with Babylon. It does not record a connected history of the empire, but in the first part it relates three episodes of special significance in the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, and the brief story of the fall of Babylon in the time of Nabonidus and Belshazzar. In the second part it presents most striking prophecies which foretell the revival of the efforts of Babylon to lead into spiritual captivity the people of God, who long centuries before had been delivered from temporal captivity in ancient Babylon. It is supplemented by the book of Revelation, the last book of the Bible, of which

it is written, "Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of the prophecy." When studied together, under the guidance of the Teacher of all truth, these two prophecies expose the deceptive working of the invisible king of both ancient and modern Babylon, and throw a most interesting and instructive light upon the present situation in the religious world.

But it is not within our province to expound these prophecies. We are now seeking to establish the historicity of some of the places and of some of the leading characters of the Old Testament, and thus to confirm faith in its accuracy. Nebuchadnezzar, the prominent character in the book of Daniel, was noted among the rulers of his time as a great builder. His name appears upon the great part of the bricks which have been taken from the site of his capital. Very natural, then, was his inquiry, "Is not this great Babylon, which I have built for the royal dwelling-place, by the might of my power and for the glory of my majesty?" But what about the greatness of Babylon to-day? Is there any convincing testimony that there ever was a great Babylon? Has the spade revealed any of its greatness? The visitor to the site of this ancient city is certainly not greatly impressed with his first view, as is indicated by this extract:

And Babylon the great is fallen. What the site of the great city looks like now can be told you by many a British officer and man who made the campaign of Mesopotamia during the Great War. A wide expanse of sandy mounds fringed on the side of the river by groves of stumpy palms, among which are the mud-huts of the villages of Kweireh and Jamjama, and on the other by a low line of mound-covered wall like the Devil's Dyke at Newmarket, beyond which is the single track of the Bagdad-Basra railway, coming from Mahawil in the north and going south to Hillah. By the side of the line is a board supported on two poles on which is painted 'Babylon Halt.' This is the railway station of Babylon.¹

Such is the testimony of today to the fulfilment of the prediction made through the prophet Isaiah, who wrote these words when Babylon was under the control of Assyria, before the New Babylonian Empire was founded: "And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldeans' pride, shall be as when

¹ *Wonders of the Past*, Vol. 2, pp. 311, 312. Edited by J. A. Hammer-ton. Article, "Babylon the Great," by H. R. Hall. Courtesy of G. P. Putnam's Sons, Publishers, New York and London.

God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah" (Isa. 13: 19). It would require a volume much larger than this one in which to narrate with any considerable detail the story of what the spade of the explorer has uncovered upon the site of the city which the proud Nebuchadnezzar rebuilt and adorned with such lavish expenditure of money and labor. Where are the broad walls? Where are the famous hanging gardens, built to give pleasure to the king's wife who came from a mountainous district? Where are the wonderful temples designed to win the favor of the gods Bel and Nebo? Where are the palaces of the king, second in magnificence only to the temples, if, indeed, they were second to them? Ah, truly, "Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen!" So complete was the ruin, and so effectually were the remains of its former grandeur hidden from sight, that, as the story goes, Herodotus, the Greek historian, passed by in full view of the mound without recognizing that the remains of a world-renowned city were within the range of his vision. What a comment upon that merely human greatness which rests upon the false foundation of the achievements of mortal man! "Seekest thou great things for thyself? seek them not." The ruins of Babylon are saying to the present generation in loud tones, "The things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal."

It is now nearly half a century since, under the leadership of some American scholars, the work of digging up some of the cities of Babylonia was undertaken. At the head of the first expedition in 1884 was Dr. William Hayes Ward, who will be remembered by many still living as then the editor of the *Independent*, since defunct. During the next fifteen years at least three other expeditions followed, but just at the close of the century a German society seriously commenced excavations upon the site of Babylon. This work was under the supervision of Dr. Robert Koldewey, who continued his labors for more than fifteen years. The results of his extended efforts have been made available to the reading public, and they are of gripping interest. The ruins of the original walls, of the hanging gardens, and of the temples and palaces have been laid bare, and they all testify that this old city was once "great Babylon." A large variety of photographs, clearly reproduced on the printed page, make vivid to the eye many features of these ruins of former greatness. All

these revelations are in harmony with both the letter and the spirit of the book of Daniel. In the light of them it requires no great stretch of the imagination to see the proud king Nebuchadnezzar wrought up to the highest pitch of anger at the three Hebrews who refused to fall down and worship the image which he had set up in the plain of Dura, or to watch him walking in the royal palace greatly lifted up at the sight of his awe-inspiring work as a builder. No pseudo-Daniel, writing three or four centuries after the capture of Babylon, could have drawn such an accurate picture exhibiting so many delicate touches as are found in the book of the real Daniel produced in the sixth century B. C. Only an eye-witness could do such a work.

The various inscriptions left by Nebuchadnezzar and discovered up to the present time deal more with his work as a builder than with his military exploits. He did, however, make reference in a general way to two or three campaigns, but without specifically mentioning all the nations involved. Here is a portion of what is known as the East India House Inscription:

In lofty confidence in him [Marduk], distant lands, far-away mountains, from the upper sea [the Mediterranean] to the lower sea [the Persian Gulf], steep paths, closed roads, where the step is imprisoned [where] there was no place for the foot, difficult roads, thirsty roads have I passed through, destroyed the rebellious, captured enemies, ruled the lands, permitted the people to flourish, [but] the bad and evil have I put away among the people.²

In a valley of the Lebanon called Wady Brisa another inscription by Nebuchadnezzar has been found which deals with an expedition to that part of the then known world. Some lines of this inscription have been rather badly defaced, but quite a portion of it is sufficiently clear so that it has been translated. Two or three extracts follow:

From the upper sea [the Mediterranean] to the lower sea [the Persian Gulf] . . . which Marduk the lord had entrusted to me, among all the lands, the totality of dwelling places, I exalted Babylon to the first place. . . . As an enemy, a stranger, had taken possession of the mountain, and had removed its products, its inhabitants had fled and gone far away. With the power of Nabu and Marduk, my lords, I ordered my troops to march to the Lebanon. The enemy,

² *Cuneiform Parallels to the Old Testament*, pp. 364, 365. Translated and edited by Robert William Rogers. The Abingdon Press.

above and below, I drove out, and made the heart of the land to rejoice, its scattered people I gathered, and brought them back to their place. That which no former king had accomplished [I did]; I cleaved high mountains, limestone I broke off [and] opened trails. I cut a road for the cedars and before Marduk, my king, I brought massive, tall, strong cedars, of wonderful beauty, whose dark appearance was impressive, the mighty products of the Lebanon. . . . The people in Lebanon I made to dwell in peace and safety. I permitted no disturber to possess [the land]. That none might produce confusion I have set up my royal image for ever.³

Toward the close of his reign (567 B. C.) Nebuchadnezzar made a campaign against Egypt, a brief report of which is found upon two small fragmentary tablets now in the British Museum. Judging from the disconnected translation it would appear that these tablets were badly mutilated, but one complete sentence is of interest since it mentions Nebuchadnezzar by name: "In the thirty-seventh year of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, the kings of Egypt came up to do battle, and Amasis, king of Egypt, called out his troops." These tablets, so far as they can be read, leave the result of the campaign in uncertainty, although it is doubtful if Nebuchadnezzar would have left an inscription which recorded his defeat.

The original of a building inscription setting forth the work of Nebuchadnezzar in extensive operations is now in the British Museum. The opening sentence runs thus: "Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, preserver of Esagila and Ezida, son of Nabopolassar, king of Babylon, am I." The devotion of this king to the gods of Babylon is emphasized in the last paragraph of this inscription:

O Marduk, lord of the gods, my divine creator, before thee may my deeds be pious, may they endure for ever. Life for many generations, abundance of posterity, a secure throne, and a long reign, grant as thy gift. Truly thou art my deliverer and my help, O Marduk. By thy faithful word, that changes not, may my weapons advance, be dreadful and crush the arms of the foe.⁴

It is certainly a testimony to the sincerity of the religious tendency of this heathen king that when the Most High revealed Himself to him in mercy and in judgment he offered whole-

³ *Id.*, pp. 365, 366.

⁴ *Id.*, p. 369.

hearted worship to the true God, saying, "Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and extol and honor the King of heaven; for all his works are truth, and his ways justice; and those that walk in pride he is able to abase" (Dan. 4: 37). Here we find the very essence of justification by faith, without any attempt at expounding a theoretical theology. This is the true theology of experience. That Nebuchadnezzar was religiously inclined is evident from his own testimony as well as from the testimony of Daniel.

According to the record made by Daniel the plain of Dura was the scene of a notable test of faith, in which the three Hebrews "quenched the power of fire." Has the plain of Dura been identified? "The most probable explanation is that of Prof. J. Oppert, the veteran Assyriologist, who found what appeared to be the base of a great statue near a mound known as Duair, east of Babylon. It is not improbable that 'the plain of Dura in the province of Babylon' means simply an extensive open space near one of the great fortifications (*duru*) of the city. That all the principal officials of the kingdom should be expected to come to the dedication of such an image is exceedingly probable." (Pinches.)

One of those experiences which have rarely been the lot of any man, befell Nebuchadnezzar, when "he was driven from men, and did eat grass as oxen." When Daniel interpreted to him his dream of the tree which was hewn down and its branches cut off, he foretold this experience, and in due time it came to pass. One afflicted with this disease, which is known as lycanthropy, "imagines himself a beast, and quitting the haunts of men, insists on leading the life of a beast." Neither Berossus nor Herodotus, the Greek historians, makes any reference to this untoward event, and it would not be in harmony with the spirit of the time for Nebuchadnezzar himself to relate it. However, it has been inferred by some scholars that his absolute cessation from his building operations during a certain period, as mentioned on one of his inscriptions, was due to what is usually called his madness. After giving an account of some of his most important works he speaks of a period when

In all my dominions I did not build a high place of power, the precious treasures of my kingdom I did not lay up. In Babylon, build-

ings for myself and for the honor of my kingdom I did not lay out. In the worship of Merodach, my lord, the joy of my heart, in Babylon the city of his sovereignty, and the seat of my empire, I did not sing his praises, I did not furnish his altars with victims, nor did I clear out the canals.⁵

The reader must decide for himself whether this inference is fully warranted, but in considering the evidence he must not overlook the fact that according to the account given by Daniel the affliction which came upon Nebuchadnezzar led him to acknowledge the true God; and the query naturally arises whether after that he would designate the heathen deity Merodach as "my lord, the joy of my heart."

Among all the kings of the ancient world this king of Babylon occupies an outstanding place. "The genius and grandeur which characterized Nebuchadnezzar and which have handed down his name among the few ancient personages known generally throughout the East, are very apparent in Scripture, and indeed in all the accounts of his reign and actions." It is an interesting fact that "a heathen writer, Abydenus, who generally draws his inspirations from Berossus, ascribes to Nebuchadnezzar a miraculous speech just before his death, announcing to the Babylonians the speedy coming of 'a Persian mule,' who with the help of the Medes would enslave Babylon." A striking comment upon this story is the additional fact that in the interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream of the great image Daniel plainly foretold to him the fall of his empire. At all events certain it is that Babylon the great is fallen, and yet it is equally true that "Babylon never dies." The Babylon of the East came to life again in the West, and it is unnecessary to seek for any archeological proof of this significant truth.

There can be no doubt of the historicity of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon when Daniel and his companions were captives in that city. The archeological proof is absolutely convincing.

⁵ George Rawlinson in Smith's *Dictionary of the Bible*, Vol. 2, p. 483.

XIX

VOICES FROM EGYPT AGAIN

The Bible at its face value is being corroborated wherever archeology immediately and definitely touches it. To illustrate this statement fully would be to cite every definite piece of archeological evidence in the Biblical field of scientific research during the last one hundred years.

—MELVIN GROVE KYLE. International Standard Bible Encyclopædia.

THE destruction of Jerusalem by the army of Nebuchadnezzar in 586 B. C. was the tragic climax of a long series of prophetic warnings and threatenings. The first definite announcement of this historical catastrophe was made by Isaiah to Hezekiah after he had failed to make known to the ambassadors from Babylon the gospel of the life-giving power of the God of heaven who had healed him of his sickness. Jeremiah followed with a series of predictions concerning troubles which were coming out of the north, culminating in the explicit declaration that the people of Jerusalem would serve the king of Babylon seventy years.

After the capture of Jerusalem in the eleventh year of Zedekiah, Nebuchadnezzar, according to the custom of the times, transplanted the better portion of its inhabitants to his own country, leaving only "the poorest of the land to be vinedressers and husbandmen." This remnant then asked the prophet Jeremiah, who chose to remain with them, to inquire of Jehovah whether they should continue to dwell in the land of their fathers, solemnly promising to abide by Jehovah's counsel. The result is well known. They were definitely instructed to remain where they were with the assurance, "I am with you to save you," but they disregarded their promise, and "they came into the land of Egypt; for they obeyed not the voice of Jehovah: and they came unto Tahpanhes." According to an apparently well-founded tradition they compelled the prophet to accompany them. At all events he was there with them, and "then came the word of Jehovah unto Jeremiah in Tahpanhes, saying, Take great stones in thy hand, and lay them with mortar in the pave-

ment, which is at the entry of Pharaoh's house in Tahpanhes, in the sight of the men of Judah; and say unto them, Thus saith Jehovah of hosts, the God of Israel: Behold, I will send and take Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, my servant, and will set his throne upon these stones that I have hid; and he shall spread his royal pavilion over them. And he shall come, and shall smite the land of Egypt." Jer. 43: 8-11.

For a considerable time the critics denied that Nebuchadnezzar ever made a campaign into Egypt, but the spade of the explorer has made havoc of this denial, and the modern discoveries have confirmed the prophecy of Jeremiah. "According to an Egyptian inscription, the Babylonian king attacked Egypt in the year 577 B. C., penetrating as far as Syene and the borders of Ethiopia. Hophra, who still reigned, was deposed, the General Amasis being raised to the throne in his place to rule the land as a vassal of the Babylonian king. According to the only historical fragment of the reign of this king known, Nebuchadnezzar made an expedition to Egypt in his thirty-seventh year. This was, to all appearance, against his vassal Amasis, who, like Zedekiah, had revolted against the powers that had raised him to the throne. The rebellion was suppressed, but the ultimate fate of Amasis is not known." (Pinches.)

The Tahpanhes of Jeremiah's day, now known as Tell De-feunch, has been located and identified. This place is situated at the northeastern corner of the Nile delta in a marshy desert, the ground being covered with debris and the remains of brick foundations. Sir William Flinders Petrie, the Egyptologist, has excavated these ruins with very interesting results:

As he set to work with his laborers, he soon discovered that the ruins were those of a great castle and palace combined. It consisted of one enormous square tower rising to the height of a number of stories, with sixteen rooms on each floor, while all around it were later structures, built up against its outer walls. Very many valuable relics and deposits were brought to light, and the kitchen, butler's pantry, and other rooms on the ground floor were found intact. But the most interesting discovery was that of a pavement of brickwork in front of the fortress, measuring about one hundred by sixty feet. This 'brick-work or pavement,' mentioned in his prophecy by Jeremiah, 'at the entrance of Pharaoh's house,' has always been a puzzle to translators and commentators, as no such place has ever been found in connection with an Egyptian palace. But here it was, just where Jeremiah said

it should be, coming to light after more than twenty-five hundred years, confirming in a remarkable manner the statement of the prophet.

Petrie says, in his report of this discovery, made in April, 1886: 'As soon as we began to uncover the plan of the palace, the exactness of the description was manifest; for here, outside the buildings adjoining the central tower, I found, by repeated trenchings, an area of continuous brickwork resting on sand, and measuring about 160 feet, facing the entrance to the buildings at the east corner. The roadway ran up a recess between the buildings, and this platform, which has no traces of superstructure, was evidently an open-air place for loading and unloading goods, or sitting out in the air, or transacting business, or conversing—just such a place, in fact, as is made by the Egyptians to this day in front of their houses, where they drink coffee, and smoke in the cool of the afternoon, and receive their visitors. Such seems to have been the object of this large platform, which was evidently a place to meet persons who would not be admitted into the palace or fort; to assemble guards, to hold large levees, to receive tribute and stores, to unload goods, and to transact the multifarious business, which, in so hot a climate, is done in the open air. This platform is therefore, unmistakably, the brickwork, or pavement, which is at the entry of Pharaoh's house in Tahpanhes.'

During all these centuries the tradition that this palace was a refuge for the daughters of the Jewish king has been preserved, and the very Arabs who live in all the neighborhood, though ignorant of the story, vouch for its truth by retaining the name. And the very brickwork is there today of which Jeremiah spoke, and on which Nebuchadnezzar spread his pavilion and planted his loyal standard in the hour of victory.¹

Another discovery of much significance has been made in Egypt during the present century. "Just across the eastern channel of the Nile below the First Cataract, at which the line between Egypt and Nubia crosses it, on the southern end of the island of Elephantiné, was made the discovery of documents of great interest. Some of them were written before the time when Ezra and Nehemiah were leading the Jews back from the captivity and rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem, and some others during the generation following the work of these two remarkable men at the Holy City." On this island certain documents were discovered in 1904 which have been edited by Prof. A. H. Sayce, but in 1907 more documents were found which are of even greater interest to the student of the Bible. It was a great surprise to archeologists to find that these papyri were written

¹ *Mounds, Monuments and Inscriptions*, pp. 180-182. By Mark B. Chapman. Cokesbury Press.

in the Aramaic language. Among them were deeds and other business papers definitely dated "with the year of the Persian sovereign, and the days of the Persian months and of the Egyptian also." The evidence thus secured showed plainly that while the Jews of the captivity were working "to restore and to build Jerusalem" after the captivity in Babylon, there was a Jewish colony living on the little island of Elephantiné located in the river Nile. The documents discovered in 1907 "introduce the names of persons mentioned in the Bible who were contemporaries of Ezra and Nehemiah, one of whom was still living when the papyri were written, while an appeal is made to the sons of another who had probably died. Sanballat, the chief enemy of Nehemiah and his people, is represented in the papyri by 'the sons of Sanballat, the governor of Samaria,' and Johanan, mentioned in Neh. 12: 22, 23, is appealed to as 'Johanan, the high priest at Jerusalem.'" Referring to the papyri discovered in 1907 a recognized authority has written thus:

The first of these—dating from 408 B. C. only three years after the last of the Assuan papyri—is a petition from the Jewish colony at Elephantiné to Bagohi—the Bagoas of Josephus—the Persian governor of Judah, to crave his intervention and help. During the temporary absence of the Persian governor of Egypt, the priests of the ram-headed Egyptian god Chnub, had bribed Waidrang, the commander of the garrison in Elephantiné, to destroy the temple of the god Yahu, of which we have already heard; and they entreat Bagohi, and also Delaiah and Shelemiah, the sons of Sanballat, the governor of Samaria, to use their influence to obtain permission for them to rebuild it. And in their petition they give very interesting particulars about the temple. It had been built for more than 120 years; and it had been respected by Cambyses when he conquered Egypt, and made it a Persian province in 525 B. C. It was a substantial and handsome building, with pillars of stone, and seven stone gates. It was used, not like a synagogue, for prayer only, but also for sacrifice; it had an altar upon which burnt-offerings, meal-offerings, and frankincense were regularly offered; and the gold and silver bowls, used for tossing the sacrificial blood against the sides of the altar, bear the same name as those used in the Temple of Jerusalem. The petitioners deplore the ruin of their sanctuary and the cessation of worship in it; they say that since it happened they have put on sackcloth, and fasted and prayed, and not anointed themselves with oil or drunk wine; and they promise that if Bagohi can obtain for them what they ask, they will, when the temple is rebuilt, ever remember him in their prayers and offer sacrifices in his name. The second papyrus is only a mutilated duplicate of the first; the third is a short memorandum of the reply sent by Bagohi and Delaiah,

to the effect that the petition had been granted, and the Temple could be rebuilt. These papyri bring us very near to the Old Testament. They were written only fifty years after Ezra brought back a second company of exiles from Babylon to Judah, and only twenty-four years after Nehemiah's second visit to Jerusalem, in 432. We breathe in them an atmosphere very similar to that into which we are brought by the Aramaic letters and edicts in the Book of Ezra; and many of the words and expressions are the same, or similar. The point, however, which particularly surprises us is the existence of a Temple, with an altar, and with sacrifices offered upon it, outside Jerusalem.²

These papyri discovered on Elephantiné have furnished reliable evidence with which to answer effectively the destructive claims of some of the critics. "If Bagoas and Sanballat were legendary characters, as Winckler has asserted, it seems strange to find them mentioned as real persons here, and one of them and the son of the other earnestly appealed to for help. If Sanballat was governor of Samaria under 'the last king of Persia' at the coming of Alexander the Great, in 331 B. C., as critics following Josephus hold, it seems strange to find two of his sons men of influence in 408 B. C., seventy-seven years before. If Nehemiah and Ezra flourished in the time of Artaxerxes II (died 359), as some have lately contended, we are filled with wonder when we find the grandson of their contemporary, Eliashib, appealed to as high priest in 441 B. C. by the Jews in Elephantiné. Grandsons do not usually precede their grandfathers." This is just another case where the spade of the modern explorer has dug the foundation from under the feet of the radical critics, and has plainly shown the unreliability of their modernistic interpretations. These documents have definitely settled questions which have been raised by the liberal commentators:

1. That Ezra and Nehemiah lived at the time represented in the books bearing their names.
2. That the ritual worship laid down in Leviticus was observed long before the time of Ezra, and therefore was not originated by him.
3. That, since the Aramaic of these documents shows that Aramaic documents quoted in Ezra, and the Aramaic passages in Daniel, do not indicate a later origin than that traditionally assigned these books, critics are forced to find other reasons for discrediting them.
4. That such characters as Sanballat and Johanan mentioned in Nehemiah, and Bagoas, the Persia governor, were not mythological,

² *Modern Research as Illustrating the Bible*, pp. 29, 30. By S. R. Driver. British Academy and Oxford University Press.

but real men, some living in the time of Ezra and Nehemiah and some but little later.

The whole result is an impression of reality and truth in the portraiture of the times as given in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah; and it is hardly possible to believe these single-hearted restorers of God's worship to have been either deceivers or deceived.³

The claim has been made by some modern critics that the books of Daniel, Ezra, and Nehemiah could not have been written earlier than the second century B. C., because some Greek and Persian words are found in them. The usual answer to this claim has been that the commercial relations between Palestine and these two countries were sufficiently close to account for this mixing of the languages, as the original names of imported articles are likely to accompany the articles. While this reasoning is probably sound and fairly convincing, yet it is now rendered unnecessary by modern discoveries. The Aramaic papyri found on the island of Elephantiné, written in the fifth century B. C., furnish clear testimony that the books in question could have been written partly in Aramaic at the times claimed by conservative Bible scholars. The importance of the discovery of these papyri at Elephantiné in its bearing upon the use of language in the time of Daniel has been well stated:

The Jews in Egypt wrote and spoke in Aramaic. There was a Jewish literature in Aramaic. When we try to realize what the writings of the Jews were, we must give to Aramaic a much greater place than before. Until the colonists at Elephantiné appeared, Aramaic was considered to be a strange tongue to the Jews: it was found in the books of Ezra, Nehemiah, and Daniel, the men who had inhabited Mesopotamia. Nobody thought that Jews living in foreign countries, like Egypt, could have any other idiom than Hebrew. The Tel-el-Amarna letters have taught us that cuneiform was the written language of Palestine shortly before Moses and afterwards. Elephantiné has shown us that Aramaic was the language of the Jews who took refuge in Egypt, and who certainly did not learn it there. They must have brought it from their native country.⁴

When confronted by these documents the destructive critics "see their 'assured results' about the origin of the Old Testament suddenly found to have been mere guesses."

³ Parke P. Flournoy in *The Biblical Review*, Oct., 1928.

⁴ *Archæology of the Old Testament*, p. 189. By Edouard Naville. Fleming H. Revell Company.

CYRUS AND BELSHAZZAR

Weighing carefully the position taken by the critics in the light of what has been revealed through the decipherment of the cuneiform inscriptions, we find that the very foundations upon which their theories rest, with reference to the points that could be tested, totally disappear. The truth is that wherever any light has been thrown upon the subject through the excavations, their hypotheses have invariably been found wanting. Moreover, what remains of their theories is based upon purely speculative grounds.—Light On the Old Testament From Babel, A. T. CLAY. Sunday School Times.

WRITING in the early part of the seventh century B. C. the prophet Isaiah made a remarkable prediction concerning the rebuilding of the city of Jerusalem and the temple of Solomon when there was no immediate prospect of their destruction, and concerning the restoration of the people of God from exile when there was no marked indication that they would be carried away from their own land. The exact words of the spokesman for Jehovah are worthy of attention: "Thus saith Jehovah: . . . I am Jehovah that maketh all things; that saith of Jerusalem, She shall be inhabited; . . . that saith of Cyrus, He is my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure, even saying of Jerusalem, She shall be built; and of the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid. . . . I have raised him [Cyrus] up in righteousness, and I will make straight all his ways: he shall build my city, and he shall let my exiles go free, not for price nor reward, saith Jehovah of hosts." Isa. 44: 24-28; 45: 13.

We have already dealt with the expedition of Nebuchadnezzar which brought about the destruction of Jerusalem and the deportation of many of its inhabitants to Babylon, and now we shall consider the archeological evidence which testifies to the capture of Babylon by Cyrus. This overthrow of the Babylonian power prepared the way for the proclamation by Cyrus which gave permission to the captive children of Judah to return to their own land, and insured them such royal assistance and pro-

tection as was involved in the notable prediction by the prophet Isaiah.

About a century after this stirring announcement was made there was born in Anshan a boy who grew up to be Cyrus king of Anshan, subject to the authority of the king of the Medes. In due time this prince revolted against the rule of the Medes, and in 550 B. C. brought their power to an end. This was followed by a series of victories which established the new Persian Empire throughout the entire peninsula of Asia Minor. The ambitious eye of this conqueror next looked toward Babylonia, and in 538 B. C. we find him before the walls of Babylon, which soon fell into his hands, and thus was brought to an end the empire founded by Nabopolassar in 625 B. C., the first of the four kingdoms symbolized in the great image of Nebuchadnezzar's dream—"great Babylon." Upon the so-called cylinder of Cyrus is inscribed quite a full account of the capture of Babylon by that monarch. It is unnecessary to reproduce the whole inscription, but the following rather lengthy extract will be sufficient for our purpose:

In all lands everywhere he [Marduk] searched, he looked through them and sought a righteous prince, after his own heart, whom he took by the hand. Cyrus, king of Anshan, he called by name, to lordship over the whole world he appointed him. . . . Marduk, the great lord, looked joyously in the caring for his people, on his pious works and righteous heart. To the city of Babylon he caused him to go, he made him take the road to Babylon, going as a friend and companion at his side. His numerous troops, in number unknown, like the waters of a river, marched armed at his side. Without battle and conflict he permitted him to enter Babylon. He spared his city Babylon a calamity. Nabonidus, the king, who did not fear him, he delivered into his hand. All the people of Babylon, of Sumer and Accad, princes and governors, fell down before him and kissed his feet. They rejoiced in his sovereignty, their faces shone. . . .

I am Cyrus, king of the world, the great king, the powerful king, king of Babylon, king of Sumer and Accad, king of the four quarters of the world, son of Cambyzes, the great king, king of the city of Anshan; great-grandson of Teispes, the great king, king of the city of Anshan; eternal seed of royalty whose rule Bel and Nebo love, whose government they rejoice in in heart. When I made my triumphal entrance into Babylon, with joy and rejoicing I took up my lordly residence in the royal palace, Marduk, the great lord, moved the noble heart of the inhabitants of Babylon to me, while I gave daily care to his worship. My numerous troops marched peacefully into Babylon. In

all Sumer and Accad I permitted no enemy to enter. The needs of Babylon and of all its cities I gladly took heed to. . . . All the kings dwelling in palaces, of all the quarters of the earth, from the Upper to the Lower sea dwelling . . . all the kings of the Westland dwelling in tents brought me their heavy tribute, and in Babylon kissed my feet.¹

Thus the testimony of archeology establishes beyond doubt the historical fact that the Babylon of Nebuchadnezzar was captured by Cyrus king of Anshan. That he did not destroy the city is certain, for almost exactly two centuries later Alexander the Great, king of Greece, captured the city and died there in 323 B. C., as the result of a fever induced by a drunken carousal. But who was the king of Babylon at the time of its capture by Cyrus, and does the fifth chapter of Daniel prove to be a reliable account of that event? According to the accredited historians Nabonidus was the last king of Babylon, but Daniel does not even mention his name, and on the other hand speaks of "Belshazzar the Chaldean king." Is there any satisfactory explanation of this marked difference between the records? Yes, there is, and for this explanation we are again indebted to the spade of the explorer.

From the time of Philo in the first century, but notably within the last century, the higher critics have seemed to take great satisfaction in impugning the reliability of the historical portions of the book of Daniel. The story of the three young men in the fiery furnace was the product of a vivid imagination, they have averred; the report of that strange madness on the part of Nebuchadnezzar was a mere Eastern fable; and inasmuch as no secular history contained any mention of Belshazzar, it was asserted with the positive air of certainty that he existed only in the mind of the prophet. Even some conservative expositors did not claim that the name Belshazzar represented a distinct historical person.

The radical critic could maintain his claim concerning Belshazzar with some show of plausibility previous to the unearthing of the monuments, tablets and inscriptions of that period. As is usually the case when, instead of accepting the statements of the Scriptures, an effort is made to explain them away, different

¹ *Cuneiform Parallels to the Old Testament*, pp. 381-383. Translated and edited by Robert William Rogers. The Abingdon Press.

theories were advanced concerning Belshazzar. On the one hand it was maintained that he was to be identified with Evilmerodach, the son and successor of Nebuchadnezzar. Another suggestion was that Belshazzar was simply another name for Nabonidus. These groundless theories have now been buried by the spade of the archeologist, and of late no commentator has dared to deny the historicity of "Belshazzar the Chaldean king."

That Belshazzar was a historical person, the son of Nabonidus, and that he was actually associated with his father in the closing years of the Neo-Babylonian empire; that he was the leading factor in the scene depicted in the fifth chapter of Daniel; that the festival there described was in harmony with the customs of the times; and that Belshazzar was really slain on that fatal night,—that these facts have been established by documentary evidence made available through the diligent researches of archeologists, is of great interest even to those Bible students who have already accepted the inspired testimony of the Scriptures as sufficient authority. It is reassuring to have a firm faith in the eternal word of God confirmed by the undisputed evidence furnished by contemporaries of the events described.

Contemporaneous documents which have been discovered in recent years furnish abundant testimony to the reliability of the fifth chapter of the book of Daniel. After more than ten years of study and research in this particular field Raymond Philip Dougherty, then Professor of Assyriology and Babylonian Literature in Yale University, gave to the public the results of his scholarly work in a book published in 1929.² This is the most complete and most authoritative publication dealing with this subject, and we shall, with much satisfaction, make available several paragraphs from it for the benefit of our readers. As to the recently discovered material in this field Professor Dougherty writes:

During three quarters of a century of advance in cuneiform decipherment the contents of numerous inscriptions dated in the reign of Nabonidus have been made available to the world. More than five hundred tablets of this type have been published in the last decade. This accumulation of records contemporaneous with the closing years of the Neo-Babylonian empire is of inestimable value to the philologist, the archeologist, and the historian. Certain documents coming from the

² *Nabonidus and Belshazzar*. Yale University Press.

time of Cyrus belong to the source material which should be studied. All these texts furnish linguistic, social, industrial, commercial, legal, and religious data the authenticity and veracity of which cannot be questioned.³

A list of the sources available from which testimony as to the reliability of the fifth chapter of Daniel includes: Cuneiform sources, six in number; Greek sources, seven in number; Jewish sources, three in number; and ecclesiastical sources, three in number.

Under six different heads the author classifies the evidence that Belshazzar was associated with his father Nabonidus during the closing years of the Neo-Babylonian empire. First he cites the fact that upon four cylinders found in the ziggurat (temple tower) of Ur there is recorded a prayer of Nabonidus in which a petition is offered in behalf of "Belshazzar, the first son proceeding from my loins." As emphasizing the value of this testimony, it is stated that "such association of a royal father and his son in religious entreaty is rare in cuneiform literature."

It is next shown that Belshazzar was associated with Nabonidus in oaths:

Cuneiform texts dated in the twelfth year of Nabonidus record oath formulas which are unusual in that Belshazzar is associated with his father on terms of approximate equality. . . . Two texts in the Yale Babylonian Collection, also dated in the twelfth year of Nabonidus' reign, contain similar oaths. . . . These three passages show conclusively that the Babylonian oath formula in the twelfth year of the reign of Nabonidus placed Belshazzar on an equality with his father.⁴

The third piece of testimony is found in an astrological report from which this brief extract is taken:

In the month Tebet, the fifteenth day, the seventh year of Nabonidus, the king of Babylon, Shum-ukin says as follows: 'The great star Venus, the star Kak-si-di, the moon and the sun, in my dream I saw; and for the favor of Nabonidus, the king of Babylon, my lord, and for the favor of Belshazzar, the son of the king, my lord, may my ear attend them.'⁵

³ *Id.*, Introduction, pp. 1, 2,

⁴ *Id.*, p. 96.

⁵ *Id.*, p. 98.

The fourth piece of testimony consists of an expression in a letter in which "the personal names mentioned indicate that it was written at Erech, probably in the time of Nabonidus." The significant words are, "the king and the son of the king."

The fifth source of testimony is texts in the Goucher College Babylonian Collection in which Belshazzar is associated with Nabonidus in the delivery of royal tribute.

The last source of evidence cited is number 227 of Tablets Belonging to Lord Amherst, published by Theophilus G. Pinches. From this tablet it appears that "Belshazzar was high enough in the kingdom to have subordinate officials equal to those of the king," and that "Belshazzar, in the performance of his administrative duties, went about from place to place, and that the important officials of his court accompanied him, which is exactly what we would expect if Belshazzar was intrusted with political responsibility." Furthermore, inasmuch as the contract recorded in the text was agreed upon in "the city of the house of the king of Babylon," it is clear that "Belshazzar's officials were attending to affairs in a royal residence."

Professor Dougherty next adduces proof to establish his view that "Nabonidus spent the seventh, ninth, tenth, and eleventh years of his reign in the city of Tema in Arabia, and that Tema was the political center from which he ruled the western part of his domain while Belshazzar looked after affairs in Akkad, *i. e.*, Babylonia." This proof is based upon a variety of documents dealing with occurrences in the time of Nabonidus. Space limits will not permit the citation of these documents, but a portion of the summary made by the author is here given:

Inscriptions of varied type have been adduced as proof that Belshazzar was an administrator of government in Babylonia during Nabonidus' absence in Arabia. The historical texts quoted are of fundamental importance, since the two inscriptions available for interpretation, *viz.*, 'A Persian Verse Account of Nabonidus' and the 'Nabonidus Chronicle,' contain statements which are not contradictory, but which lead to the same conclusion. . . . The former indicates that Nabonidus conquered Tema and made it his residence in the third year of his reign; the latter shows that Nabonidus was in the Westland soon after he became king, and that he was at Tema in the seventh, ninth, tenth, and eleventh years of his reign. Each inscription, unsupported by the other, is sufficient to demonstrate Belshazzar's administrative position in Babylonia during the period when Nabonidus was interested

in Tema. Their combined testimony is authentic evidence of the highest value.

Another type of Neo-Babylonian literature, viz., records of business transactions dated in the reign of Nabonidus, have been found to reveal the same historical situation. The validity of the contents of contract tablets is unquestioned. Coming from ancient archives, these documents are genuine and reliable. . . . On the whole, the contract tablets which have been quoted authenticate what has been learned from historical sources concerning Nabonidus' stay in Arabia and Belshazzar's consequent position of authority in Babylonia. . . .

Letters comprise a fourth type of cuneiform literature connected intimately with the present inquiry. The value of personal messages as criteria of individual experiences and political situations is recognized. . . . The urgent message in which Belshazzar summons the temple elders of Erech along with a prominent Babylonian, proved by other texts to have been a chief officer of the king, is exceptionally capable of an interpretation entirely in harmony with the exalted position occupied by the eldest son of Nabonidus.

Hence the different types of cuneiform literature, which deal in any way with the question of Belshazzar's participation in governmental administration during Nabonidus' absence in Arabia, are in complete agreement. . . . Belshazzar was undoubtedly the second ruler of the land.⁶

It is well known that the testimony of the Cyrus cylinder concerning the capture of Babylon and the description of this event by the Greek historians Herodotus and Xenophon and Berossus seem to be at variance, and this has led to a varied and extended discussion of the subject. Herodotus emphasizes the warlike aspect of the movements of Cyrus, speaks of a siege of the city, and that entrance was gained by turning aside the waters of the Euphrates which flowed through Babylon until his troops were able to wade through its channel. Xenophon seems to refer to the same method of attack. Berossus declares that Nabonidus went out of Babylon with his forces to meet Cyrus, and was defeated. Then Cyrus captured the city. Professor Dougherty presents the testimony of these historians, and then, in summing up the data furnished by the various documents, makes these observations:

The Nabonidus Chronicle mentions nothing concerning a siege of Babylon or the lowering of the river to gain access to the city. If these events were historical, it would appear that there ought to be evidence of them in cuneiform literature. However, the text of the Nabonidus

⁶ *Id.*, pp. 134-137.

Chronicle is extremely terse, and there is no assurance that it contains a complete statement of all that occurred in connection with Cyrus' conquest of Babylon. Nevertheless, it is in this connection that the greatest divergence exists. The Nabonidus Chronicle states that Gobryas and the troops of Cyrus entered Babylon *bala saltum*, 'without fighting.' In the record concerning Cyrus' battle with the Babylonians at Opis the idiom used to denote armed conflict is *saltum epesu*, 'exercise hostility,' 'fight.' In the passage describing the taking of Sippar the expression employed is *bala saltum sabit*, 'was captured without fighting.' The import of the word *saltum* is indicated by the slaughter which occurred at Opis. Therefore the statement that Babylon was entered 'without fighting' may mean that no general sanguinary battle transpired. Herodotus presents this view of the seizure of Babylon, but Xenophon's narrative gives the impression that there was considerable bloodshed. . . . A reasonable interpretation of events is that the main test of military strength took place at Opis, that Sippar and Babylon yielded with no show of determined resistance, and that Cyrus was able to enter Babylon in royal procession after it had been brought under thorough control by his troops. The battle at Opis proves that the Babylonians at first resisted Cyrus with great animosity, and the Cyrus cylinder indicates that the Persian king demanded complete submission. These considerations show that the enmity which Herodotus and Xenophon indicate as having existed between Cyrus and the Babylonians can claim some corroboration from cuneiform sources. Hence the picture of Cyrus as an entirely peaceful overthrower of the Neo-Babylonian dynasty cannot be accepted without modification.⁷

Taking all the testimony together it would seem that when the main city of Babylon surrendered to the forces of Cyrus, Belshazzar and his followers shut themselves up in the palace or citadel, and offered a desperate resistance to their foe. That this was possible is evident from the nature of such a citadel:

It is clear that a Babylonian citadel was not simply a fortress to be used by the garrison for the defense of the city as a whole. It was a royal residence, into which the monarch and his court could shut themselves for safety should the outer wall of the city itself be penetrated. . . . In the case of the Southern citadel of Babylon on which excavations have now been continuously carried out for sixteen years, we shall see that it formed a veritable township in itself. It was a city within a city, a second Babylon in miniature.⁸

The brief story of the fall of Babylon recorded in the fifth

⁷ *Id.*, pp. 183, 184.

⁸ *A History of Babylon*, p. 27. By L. W. King. Chath and Windus, London.

chapter of Daniel has been supplemented and corroborated by various volumes which have made known to us the results of the latest discoveries in the field of archeology. It is remarkable that a modern scholar should deem the subject worthy of extended study, and it is heartening to the believer in the inerrancy of the Holy Scriptures, even when they are not substantiated by other documents, to find that his book to which we have referred, *Nabonidus and Belshazzar*, a volume of more than the ordinary size, so fully confirms the Biblical record. His own estimate of the results of his research is a telling answer to those radical critics who have attempted to consign Belshazzar to oblivion and to deny absolutely the reliability of the fifth chapter of Daniel:

The foregoing summary of information concerning Belshazzar, when judged in the light of data obtained from the texts discussed in this monograph, indicates that of all non-Babylonian records dealing with the situation at the close of the Neo-Babylonian empire, *the fifth chapter of Daniel ranks next to cuneiform literature in accuracy* [italics as in the text] so far as outstanding events are concerned. The Scriptural account may be interpreted as excelling because it employs the name Belshazzar, because it attributes royal power to Belshazzar, and because it recognizes that a dual rulership existed in the kingdom. Babylonian cuneiform documents of the sixth century B. C. furnish clear-cut evidence of the correctness of these three basic historical nuclei contained in the Biblical narrative dealing with the fall of Babylon.⁹

To many readers of the Old Testament the word Babylon, which occurs hundreds of times, may be a mere combination of sounds which do not recall to the mind any vivid picture of a real city. The spade of the excavator and the camera of the photographer have brought to life, as it were, the dead and buried ruins of ancient greatness, and a faithful study of these uncovered cities in the light of the literary documents so abundant in some centers has enabled well-known students of antiquities to reconstruct with much certainty the capitals of ancient empires. Now the lofty walls, the impressive temples, and the extensive and highly adorned palaces of ambitious monarchs seem to rise before our eyes, and we can study the habits and customs of the native peoples as we walk up and down their well-built streets. This is notably true of Babylon. So complete

⁹ *Nabonidus and Belshazzar*, pp. 199, 200. By Raymond Philip Dougherty. Yale University Press.

and thorough has been the work of the various excavators that the description of many places of interest, such as the tower of Babel, already discussed, and the banquet hall of Belshazzar, reads much like a modern guide-book to London or New York.

In the walls of this home of Nebuchadnezzar hundreds of inscribed bricks have been found, "many of them in the foundations of the great hall of the Principal Court and of its great gate-way," which designate this ruler as "king of Babylon," and describe particularly some of his building operations. The excavator would of course

be better pleased if the texts varied on the different bricks, and afforded him an opportunity of acquiring more details of building achievements, and their nomenclature and purpose. But this desire for information on the part of later scholars was evidently not foreseen by the king of Babylon. The principal object was to preserve the name of the king as the promoter of mighty works, and the hundreds of inscribed bricks, and the millions of stamped bricks do in fact form an enduring monument to the king, which it would be difficult to surpass.¹⁰

In Daniel's account of the fall of Babylon we are told that on the last night of his life "Belshazzar the king made a great feast to a thousand of his lords." It was then that they daringly drank the wine of Babylon in the vessels used in the worship of the true God at Jerusalem, and their revelry was interrupted by the mysterious writing on the wall which announced their tragic fate. Little did Belshazzar think that after the lapse of many centuries the ruins of his banquet hall would be uncovered and its measurements be taken. But so it is. The facts are stated in a brief description of the citadel of Babylon recently excavated:

To the south lies the largest chamber of the citadel, the throne-room of the Babylonian kings. It is so clearly marked out for this purpose that no reasonable doubt can be felt as to its having been used as their principal audience chamber. If anyone should desire to localize the scene of Belshazzar's eventful banquet, he can surely place it with complete accuracy in this immense room. It is seventeen meters [about fifty-six feet] broad and fifty-two meters [about one hundred and sixty-eight feet] long. The walls on the longest side are six meters [about twenty feet] thick, considerably in excess of those at the ends, and lead

¹⁰ *The Excavations at Babylon*, p. 86. By Robert Koldewey. The Macmillan Company.

us to suppose that they supported a barrel-vaulting, of which, however, there is no proof. A great central door and two equally important side doors open upon the court. Immediately opposite the main door in the back wall there is a doubly recessed niche in which doubtless the throne stood, so that the king could be visible to those who stood in the court, an arrangement similar to that of the Nimmach temple, where the temple statue could be clearly seen from the court.¹¹

Thus we have further and convincing proof that the Daniel of the captivity wrote the book which bears his name, and that he was absolutely accurate both in his direct statement of facts and in the conditions necessarily implied in his narrative. There was a real banquet hall in ancient Babylon large enough to accommodate a thousand guests, and there "Belshazzar the Chaldean king was slain."

No chapter in the Bible has been more completely discredited by the higher critics than the fifth chapter of Daniel, and now it has come to pass that no chapter in the Bible has been more satisfactorily confirmed than this same chapter. In this time of blatant skepticism the foundations are being uncovered and are found to be secure. Again we are reminded that "the word of our God shall stand forever."

¹¹ *Id.*, pp. 103, 104.

XXI

LUKE A RELIABLE HISTORIAN

The more closely we are able to test the story in Acts, the more vivid and true to the situation and surroundings does it prove to be, and the more justified are we in pressing closely every inference from the little details that occur in it.—SIR WILLIAM M. RAMSAY.

CHRISTIANITY is a historical religion. "The Christian doctrine is a doctrine concerning *facts* which have occurred and a *person* who has been manifested within the sphere of human observation." Not only so, but Christianity is the greatest factor in shaping human events toward a definite outcome, and is itself embedded in human history. But in the face of these fundamental and epoch-making truths, the historical accuracy of the Scriptures, in which the story of historical Christianity is told, has been seriously and persistently impugned by the higher critics. This is true both of the Old and of the New Testament. Jesus of Nazareth testified concerning Moses, "He wrote of me," but according to the verdict of some modern scholars the Pentateuch is a mere compilation of myths and legends current in the time of Moses, derived very largely from Babylonian sources. According to the same authority many of the so-called prophecies were written after the events mentioned in them had become history, while others are the forecasts of keen observers of the tendencies of the times in which they lived. From the same standpoint some of the historical statements in the New Testament have been declared to be contrary to fact, and in this way a large question mark has been attached to the claim for its inspiration.

An outstanding instance of this campaign to discredit the authority of the New Testament is the dealing with "the first enrolment made when Quirinius was governor of Syria," mentioned in Luke 2: 1-5. The objections to the accuracy of the statements here made have been briefly but clearly stated by A. B. Bruce:

1. Apart from the Gospel, history knows nothing of a general imperial census in the time of Augustus.

2. There could have been no Roman census in Palestine during the time of Herod the Great, a *rex socius* [an associate king].

3. Such a census at such a time could not have been carried out by *Quirinius*, for he was not governor in Syria then, nor till ten years later, when he did make a census which gave rise to a revolt under Judas of Galilee.

4. Under a Roman census it would not have been necessary for Joseph to go to Bethlehem, or for Mary to accompany him.¹

While no enrolment document of the time of *Quirinius* has actually been discovered, yet many enrolment papers have been found, and their dates are such as to warrant the conclusion that enrolments were made at the time indicated by Luke. The facts are well stated in this paragraph:

Few official documents amongst the papyri have awakened greater interest than the census returns or house-to-house enrolments, of which a large number have been recovered, extending over a period of nearly two and a half centuries. It is impossible here to enter into the many important questions that these returns raise, but one or two particulars regarding them may be mentioned. Thus it has been established beyond a doubt that the enrolments followed a cycle of fourteen years, and that they were sent in during, and generally toward the end of, the first year of the new census-period—the census-paper, for example, of A. D. 48–49 containing the facts required for the enrolment of A. D. 47–48. As yet we are not in possession of a return for any period earlier than A. D. 19–20, but there is general agreement that the whole system was originated by Augustus, perhaps as early as B. C. 10–9, and that probably in this, as in so many other details of his administration, he made use of a similar system already in existence in Egypt.²

It will be seen at once that the third objection is the fundamental one. Of course if *Quirinius* was not governor of Syria at the time specified, he could not have made a Roman census then. Closely connected with this is the question whether any general census was made in the time of Augustus. The other objections are of comparatively minor importance. The time when *Quirinius* was governor of Syria must therefore first be considered.

Those who are reasonably familiar with the literature of this

¹ *The Expositor's Greek Testament*, Vol. 1, p. 470. Hodder and Stoughton, London.

² *Selections From the Greek Papyri*, p. 14. By George Milligan. Courtesy of G. P. Putnam's Sons, Publishers, New York and London.

subject know that W. M. Ramsay, the English scholar and writer, has made the most extensive and most valuable contributions in favor of the historical accuracy of the New Testament. In estimating the character of his work it is helpful to be told by himself that he commenced the study of this subject with a leaning toward the higher critical view:

I may fairly claim to have entered on this investigation without any prejudice in favor of the conclusion which I shall now attempt to justify to the reader. On the contrary, I began with a mind unfavorable to it, for the ingenuity and apparent completeness of the Tübingen theory had at one time quite convinced me. It did not lie then in my line of life to investigate the subject minutely; but more recently I found myself often brought in contact with the book of Acts as an authority for the topography, antiquities, and society of Asia Minor. It was gradually borne in upon me that in various details the narrative showed marvellous truth.³

A personal study both of the documents and of the countries involved led Ramsay, contrary to his preconceived views, to the well established conclusion that the writers of the New Testament did not incorporate myths or unconfirmed traditions into their documents, but that they recorded historical facts which have since been well authenticated. His testimony is therefore of more than ordinary value. Note this reference to it:

Critics, who in general have accepted Luke's veracity, have sometimes admitted that here [Luke 2: 1ff.] he fell into error and confused the census under Quirinius in 6-7 A. D. when Quirinius came, after the banishment of Archelaus, to take a census and to collect taxes, much to the indignation of the Jews (cf. Acts 5: 37; Jos. Ant. xviii, i). It was not known that Quirinius had been governor of Syria before this time, nor was there any other knowledge of a census under Augustus. The case against Luke seemed strong. But Ramsay (*Was Christ Born at Bethlehem?* 227ff.) shows that the inscription at Tibur, as agreed by Mommsen and like authorities, shows that Quirinius 'twice governed Syria as legatus of the divine Augustus.' He was consul in 12 B. C., so that the first mission was after that date. Ramsay shows also from the papyri that the 14-year cycle was used for the Roman census (many census papers are known from 20 A. D. on). He argues that the first one was instituted by Augustus in 8 B. C. Herod, as a vassal king, would naturally be allowed to conduct it in the Jewish fashion, not the

³ *St. Paul, the Traveller and the Roman Citizen*, pp. 7, 8. By Sir W. M. Ramsay. Courtesy of G. P. Putnam's Sons, Publishers, New York and London.

Roman, and it was probably delayed several years in the provinces. Thus once more Luke is vindicated in a remarkable way.⁴

In various parts of Palestine additional documents are constantly being discovered which confirm the Bible record. One such case is referred to in this paragraph:

Probably the most important of all the new inscriptions found at Antioch is the one which gives additional confirmation to the view that Quirinius (Luke 2: 2) was twice governor, once 6-4 B. C. and once earlier, probably 16-12 B. C. There are several ancient inscriptions that relate to the prefecture of Quirinius, but this is the most important.⁵

Objection number 4 that "under a Roman census it would not have been necessary for Joseph to go to Bethlehem," is satisfactorily answered by a papyrus now in the British Museum, dated 104 A. D., of which the following is the translation:

Gaius Vibius Maximus prefect of Egypt [says]: Seeing that the time has come for the house to house census, it is necessary to compel all those who for any cause whatsoever are residing out of their homes to return to their own homes, that they may both carry out the regular order of the census, and may also attend diligently to the cultivation of their allotments.⁶

The reason why Mary accompanied Joseph to Bethlehem has been plausibly explained in this statement:

In the national character which Herod gave to his enrolment, probably, lies the reason why Mary as well as Joseph went up to Jerusalem—a detail which would be so inexplicable if the enrolment had been modelled after a Roman census. To go personally to the enrolment was regarded as substantiating a claim to true Hebrew origin and family. All they that went to their proper city were true Hebrews; and, as Luke says, 'all (i. e., all true Hebrews in Palestine) went to enrol themselves, every one to his own city.'⁷

⁴ A. T. Robertson in *The International Standard Bible Encyclopædia*, p. 1940.

⁵ *The New Archaeological Discoveries and Their Bearing Upon the New Testament*, p. 538. By Camden M. Cobern. Funk and Wagnalls Company.

⁶ Original Greek and Translation in *Selections From the Greek Papyri*, p. 73. By George Milligan. Courtesy of G. P. Putnam's Sons, Publishers, New York and London.

⁷ *Was Christ Born at Bethlehem?* p. 120. By Sir W. M. Ramsay. Courtesy of G. P. Putnam's Sons, Publishers, New York and London.

The bearing of recently discovered documents upon the reliability of Luke's record, with a statement of the conclusion warranted by them, has been clearly stated by a recognized scholar. This extract is rather long, but it is difficult to cover the ground in fewer words:

The Problem of Quirinius.—This has been the hardest tangle to unravel of all in the tissue of errors woven round Luke 2: 1-7. Luke seemed so obviously in error. 'This was the first enrolment made when Quirinius was governor of Syria' (Luke 2: 2). He himself in Acts 5: 37 refers to 'the enrolment' when Judas of Galilee rose up and drew away some of the people after him and perished. We know that Quirinius was governor of Syria in A. D. 6, when that census was taken which so angered the Jews (Josephus, Ant. XVIII, i, 1). Hence it was argued that Luke simply blundered and dated this census under Quirinius at the time of the birth of Christ, instead of A. D. 6. Lake (*The Expositor*, Nov., 1912, pp. 462f.) actually argues that the birth of Jesus occurred A. D. 6, but that view is wholly unlikely to win favor. Plummer (Comm., p. 50) says about Quirinius: 'We must be content to leave the difficulty unsolved,' but he considers it 'monstrous' to throw away the whole narrative because of this 'mistake as to Cyrenius' [Quirinius].

It is Ramsay again who has cleared the matter of confusion by a series of inscriptions that bear on the career of Quirinius. 'The conclusion of Mommsen, of Borghesi, and of de Rossi that Quirinius governed Syria twice has been generally accepted by modern scholars.' (Ramsay, *Was Christ Born at Bethlehem?* p. 109.) The 'Lapis Tiburtinus' is accepted as referred to Quirinius (*Id.*, p. 273) and contains the words 'iterum Syriam,' 'a second time Syria.' The Inscriptions of Æmilius Secundis (Lapis Venetus) (*Id.*, p. 274) have 'P. Sulpicio Quirinio legatus Augusti Cæsar' and 'idem jussu Quirini censum.' It is not clear to which of the two times when Quirinius was governor of Syria this inscription about the census refers.

But Ramsay (*Bearing of Recent Discovery*, p. 285) gives an inscription from Antioch in Pisidia, examined by himself in 1912 and in 1913 and photographed by Lady Ramsay, which speaks of Gaius Coristanus Fronto as 'prefect of P. Sulpicius Quirinius duumvir.' (*Præfecto P. Sulpici Quirini duumviri.*) This inscription belongs to the date B. C. 10-7. In the village of Hissarardi, close to Antioch, Ramsay found another inscription (*Id.*, p. 291) where the same man is called 'prefect of P. Sulpicius Quirinius duumvir' and 'chief of engineers, tribune of soldiers, prefect of a Posporan cohort,' and also 'prefect of M. Servilius.' This inscription shows 'Quirinius as engaged in the war (Homonadenian War), and therefore as governor of Syria before 6 B. C.' 'It is also a crowning step in the proof that the story in Luke 2: 1-3 is correct.' The proof is complete that Quirinius was twice 'governor' in Syria, though not necessarily in the same way each time. Luke does not say

that Quirinius was proprætor or procurator in the first census, but only governor.

'Thus Quirinius and Servilius were governing the two adjoining provinces, Syria-Cilicia and Galatia, around the year 8 B. C., when the First Census was made.' (Ramsay, *Bearing of Recent Discovery*, p. 300.) Surely, it is a remarkable demonstration. 'The exact year is a matter of chronological interest; it was in the reign of King Herod. Every circumstance narrated by Luke has been conclusively shown to be natural and probable. The circumstances are those which ordinarily accompanied a Roman census, and Quirinius was in office about that time for several years.' (*Id.*, p. 293.) For all these years the record in Luke 2: 1-7 has stood all by itself, the butt of ridicule by historians and theologians. Now the rubbish heaps of Egypt and the stones of Asia Minor cry aloud in support of the narrative. The enemies of Luke are put to rout.⁸

It is one of the characteristics of the writers of the New Testament that they sometimes enter into minute and apparently unimportant details. This is convincing testimony to the reliability of these documents, as no fraudulent writings of a later time would venture into a field where mistakes could so easily be made and so easily discovered, and thus the real character of the documents be exposed. A much discussed instance of historical details is found in Luke 3: 1, 2. In these two verses five historical facts are mentioned as being coincident with the fifteenth year of Tiberius Cæsar: Pontius Pilate was governor of Judæa, Herod was tetrarch of Galilee, his brother Philip was tetrarch of Iturea and Trachonitis, Lysanias was tetrarch of Abilene, and it was in the high-priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas. "No such elaborate chronological precision is to be found elsewhere in the New Testament, and it comes fitly from him who claims it as the peculiar recommendation of his Gospel, that he had 'accurately traced down all things from the first.'" With such unusual exactness the commencement of the ministry of John the Baptist is fixed by Luke. The inevitable question is, Does the testimony of other historians confirm the reliability of the Lukan record?

It is of course only natural to expect that a certain class of writers who command public attention by assailing the Scriptures, should, either by direct statement or by indirect implication, insert an interrogation point after each one of these state-

⁸ *Luke the Historian, in the Light of Research*, pp. 127-129. By A. T. Robertson. Chas. Scribner's Sons.

ments, but this should not disquiet the sincere believer. What are the facts? "Pilate was governor of the Roman province of Judæa from 26 A. D. to 36 A. D.," covering thus the whole time of the public ministry of both John the Baptist and Jesus. This Herod is Herod Antipas, by whose order John the Baptist was put to death. Philip was Herod Philip, the brother of Herod Antipas, and his name is preserved to us in Cæsarea Philippi [Cæsarea of Philip], the new name of the old Paneas which he rebuilt or adorned. Even the apparently least important and least relevant item, that Lysanias was at that time tetrarch of Abilene, has been substantiated. "The evangelist Luke is thoroughly correct when he assumes that in the fifteenth year of Tiberius there was a Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene," says Schürer, and Samuel J. Andrews writes: "This statement respecting Lysanias shows, when carefully examined, the accuracy of the evangelist's information of the political history of his times, and should teach us to rely upon it even when unconfirmed by contemporaneous writers."

As to the high priests: first note that the Revised Version reads "in the high-priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas." "As Caiaphas was the actual high priest at the time, one would have expected his name to have stood, if not alone, at least first, equivalent to, under Caiaphas, the actual high priest, and the ex-high priest, Annas, still an influential senior. One can only suppose that among the caste of high priests past and present (there had been three between Annas and Caiaphas) Annas was so outstanding that it came natural to name him first. Annas had been deposed arbitrarily by the Roman governor, and this may have increased his influence among his own people. His period of office was A. D. 7-14, that of Caiaphas A. D. 17-35." (Bruce.)

Another interesting comment on this matter is made by Dean Farrar in these words:

We may here observe, (1) that Annas, having been merely superseded by the will of Valerius Gratus, would, by all serious-minded Jews, be still regarded as High Priest *de jure*, according to the Mosaic law (Num. 35: 25). (2) That whether he held the office of Sagan or of Nasi, or not, there is sufficient evidence to show that he was at this time the most influential and powerful leader of the aristocratic, sacerdotal, and Sadducean party at Jerusalem. (3) That this leading position of Annas is clearly recognized by Josephus (Antiquities 20, 9, 1),

who, like the evangelist, speaks vaguely about the mere puppets of civil power who at this period became titular High Priests in rapid succession.⁹

This matter is discussed at considerable length by Karl Wieseler, who examines quite fully the various explanations suggested by different writers. The argument by which he establishes the accuracy of Luke's statement concerning Annas and Caiaphas and the other officials mentioned, is too lengthy to be reproduced here, but his conclusion is worthy of note:

We have now subjected the whole of the notes of time to a strict examination, and we can arrive at no other conclusion than this, which cannot be impressed too frequently or too decidedly on the opponents of a New Testament chronology, that while, up to this point, Luke has not only shown his desire to proceed in strict chronological principles, but may be proved to have actually done so, he has in these two verses attested both his endeavor after, and his knowledge of, chronology in a very evident manner: for he has not made a single statement which does not harmonize most perfectly with the leading date, the fifteenth year of Tiberius, i. e., 19 Aug. 781 A. U. C.—19 Aug. 782 A. U. C.¹⁰

The age-old method of opposing Christianity is to arouse the mob spirit. The age-old argument is that this religion interferes with our profitable business. So it was in the days of the apostle Paul, and so it is now. "The most sensitive part of 'civilized' man is his pocket." An interesting example of this method of opposing a different teaching of religion is found in the experience of the apostle Paul at Ephesus. The record of this missionary adventure is found in the nineteenth chapter of Acts, and the writer, Luke, introduces such a number of realistic details that his picture is a vivid one in its setting, and the confirmation of his story by the use of the spade, even in some of its minor touches, is a valuable contribution in the field of archeology.

For three months after his arrival in Ephesus the apostle Paul taught in the synagogue. His subject was the central theme of the gospel, "the things concerning the kingdom of God." As the result of his preaching opposition developed, as it always does when new phases of the gospel are presented to an old congregation, and so Paul and his disciples withdrew, and for two years he was found "reasoning in the school of Tyrannus." The mod-

⁹ *The Life of Christ*, p. 674. Excursus 1. E. P. Dutton & Co.

¹⁰ *A Chronological Synopsis of the Four Gospels*, p. 175.

ern publicity methods were then unknown, but without the aid of newspaper or radio "all they that dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord," and God bore witness to the spoken word by "special miracles."

A public burning in Ephesus of many books which taught "magical arts" showed clearly that the apostle did not deal in glittering generalities and philosophical speculation, but plainly presented the truth as it is in Jesus, with direct application to the outstanding sins of the people. The natural result followed. Devotion to the false gods was weakened. There was a depression in the business of those who made silver shrines of Diana and sold them. A leader in this industry was Demetrius, and he did not call for a government commission to investigate the cause of the depression and to provide a remedy, but he appealed directly to the pocket-books of his associates, with the effective plea, "Sirs, ye know that by this business we have our wealth." Of course "this business" would collapse if the people accepted the teaching of Paul that "they are no gods, that are made with hands." Hand-made gods, and especially the silver shrines of Diana must continue to be worshiped, or the business depression already felt would become a crisis.

The shout is raised, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians," the mob gathers in the great theater, and the whole city seems to be in an uproar. The townclerk appears, the assembly is quieted, Ephesus is acknowledged to be "temple-keeper of the Great Diana," and Demetrius and his associates are advised to seek redress of their troubles in the courts of law. So the incident closed.

But of what interest is all this to us now? Who cares whether Diana is great or not? Her shrines are no longer sold and the business of Demetrius cannot be revived. Very good. But our interest is in another direction. Our inquiry is, Was Luke a reliable historian? Is his description of this fanatical outbreak true to the facts of the time of Paul? For a satisfactory and convincing answer to these queries we are indebted to the spade of the explorer. The site of the Ephesus of Paul's day has been discovered, explored, and identified. The story of this work is interesting, and the results provide further and valuable confirmation of the accuracy of the Scriptures. A brief statement of the leading facts will now be given.

Within the memory of some who read these lines the excavation of Ephesus commenced. It was in Ephesus that the apostle Paul established a church, and "to the saints that are in Ephesus" he wrote that letter which has ministered spiritual blessing to millions of readers in many languages, and in which he expounded "my understanding of the mystery of Christ." The first of the seven letters to the churches preserved for us in the writings of the apostle John was "to the angel of the church in Ephesus," and according to accepted tradition this apostle spent his closing days in this city. It was to the elders of the church in Ephesus, whom Paul called to Miletus, that he presented that striking summary of his work among them which is found in Acts 20: 18-35. It was on the occasion of the celebration of the fifteenth centenary of the ecumenical council of Ephesus, which convened in 431 A. D., that Pope Pius XI issued on December 25, 1931, his encyclical *Lux Veritatis*, in which he emphasized the teaching, adopted fifteen centuries before, that Mary is the mother of God, and urged "brothers and sons most dear to us" to return to the fold of the Roman Catholic Church. These facts give added interest to the discoveries which have been made from time to time on the site of ancient Ephesus.

In view of the fact that the townclerk of Ephesus regarded it as a matter of common knowledge that that city was "temple-keeper of the great Diana, and of the image which fell down from Jupiter," it seems only natural that interest should center in the discovery of the temple of Diana. After spending about six years in investigating the ruins of Ephesus which had been hidden from view for centuries, Mr. J. T. Wood determined the general location of the temple. Of his further experience we read:

Then he began, inside of the ancient sacred temenos, to hunt for the ruins of the temple itself, and on December 31, 1869, at a depth of twenty feet, he came upon its white marble pavement made of slabs of pure marble three inches thick. For five years longer he worked here, employing from 100 to 300 native laborers digging up the magnificent capitals and sculptured columns and massive blocks in white, blue, red and yellow marble, now to be seen in the Ephesus gallery of the British Museum. He found six or more wonderfully sculptured drums from ancient columns, so huge that it took fifteen men fifteen days to lift one of them from the pavement. These drums were twenty feet in circumference and six feet high, having eight figures, all of life size, sculptured on them. He found some splendid statues, like that of

Hercules struggling with the Queen of the Amazons; what was more important, he discovered hundreds of temple inscriptions; so that when his excavations ended in 1874, he had cleared away 132,000 cubic yards of debris from the ancient site, and was able to report with certainty and fulness concerning this temple so famous in heathen and early Christian history.

The temple was octastylis, and about 160 feet in width by 340 in length; its richness may be imagined when we notice that, instead of mortar, gold is reputed to have been used between the joints of the marble blocks. The cella, or Holy of Holies, was seventy feet wide and open to the sky. Here was found *in situ* what the excavator believed to be the foundation of the ancient altar, twenty feet square, close to which must have stood the divine statue. Many fragments were found of the large white marble tiles which covered the roof of the temple and of the double rows of fluted columns in the peristyle. Over 700 inscriptions were also brought to light.

When the temple was burned on the night Alexander the Great was born [356 B. C.] all Asia helped in its restoration. The temple worship was never more enthusiastic, seemingly, than at the era when Paul visited Ephesus. . . . The votive gifts prove that the temple was increasing in wealth during the first Christian century. It was captured by the Goths in the middle of the third century and left desolate; a little later, when the early Christians became dominant at Ephesus, it was completely destroyed. . . . It is literally true that, with the exception of a little pile of inferior foundations, not one stone remains above another of this most glorious structure.¹¹

The testimony of the townclerk, as recorded in Acts 19: 35, that Ephesus was "temple-keeper of the great Diana" is definitely corroborated by a recently discovered inscription which is mentioned in this paragraph:

The Acts tells us that Ephesus was Neokeros, or 'temple-warden,' of Artemis [Diana]. This was an honorary title conferred on cities, or, in some cases, in relation to the worship of the emperor, and also of Artemis [Diana]. Curiously enough, until recent discoveries, there was no certain evidence that it was used of Ephesus in relation to Artemis [Diana], although it was known to be used in relation to Augustus. Later discoveries have repaired the defect. 'The city of the Ephesians . . . twice temple-warden of the Augusti, according to the decrees of the Senate, and temple-warden of Artemis [Diana],' so the city describes itself in an inscription.¹²

¹¹ *The New Archæological Discoveries and Their Bearing Upon the New Testament*, pp. 462-464. By Camden M. Cobern. Funk and Wagnalls Company.

¹² *Authority and Archæology*, p. 356. Edited by David G. Hogarth. John Murray, London.

It is certainly interesting, and possibly significant that it was at an ecumenical council held in Ephesus in 431 A. D. that the Virgin Mary was officially exalted to be the Mother of God. The possible connection between this action and the devotion of the people of Ephesus to their female goddess Artemis, or Diana, has not escaped attention. "A number of inscriptions mention the Virgin Mary, and Sir W. M. Ramsay is certain that the worship of the Great Mother at Ephesus led to special reverence to the virgin. . . . The 'virginizing' of Christianity is largely due to the influence of Ephesian thought, and Ephesus—the most important city of Christianity next to Jerusalem—was affected largely by the ancient reverence for the 'Great Mother.' It was not so much due to the residence of Mary at Ephesus—which is not very thoroughly proved—as to the ancient cult that the early Christian bishops emphasize the 'glory of the female' and give their glowing panegyrics of the 'Mother of God.'"

The excavations at Ephesus conducted by the Austrians have developed most important results. They gave "a most thorough examination of the ruins between the harbor and the mountains, where the old Hellenic city stood, and especially of the great theater" where the mob gathered under the leadership of Demetrius. It is more than probable that Paul's life was saved by his friends when they "besought him not to adventure himself into the theater." Of the work of the Austrians we are told:

They found an arched roadway nearly half a mile long running from the harbor to the theater, lined with monumental buildings. . . . They thoroughly explored the theater, which was the central object in the ancient city, and in size and beauty at least equal to any now used in London or Paris. Set up against the mountain which was utilized in order to give grandeur to its architecture, it still seems magnificent even in its ruins, and the acoustics are so perfect that even a whisper can be heard back to the topmost row of seats. The Austrians have minutely traced the changes in the architecture of the auditorium and orchestra during the centuries even down to the smallest detail, the enlarging of a door or the change in the size of a window. The reader cannot be expected to take interest in more than the general statement that the theater could seat nearly 25,000 people, and that the orchestra was 80 by 37 feet, and the stage about 20 feet deep and 80 feet long, being supported by 26 round pillars and 10 square piers.

In front of the great theater was the Serapion, and on its west side

the Odeum, or lyric theater, corresponding to our music hall. . . . The school of Tyrannus (Acts 19: 9), where Paul gave his peripatetic talks, was probably not the hall of a sophist, for the proud sophists would have held aloof from making such an arrangement with a Jew; but must have been the room of an elementary teacher, who according to custom used his class-rooms only twice daily, teaching a few hours in the early morning and a little while in the afternoon. Thus the rooms would be empty and very suitable for such work as Paul wanted to do, especially if, as was customary, these lecture rooms were adjacent to the street. The inscriptions give many points which ought to be interesting to the Bible student as he reads the story of Paul's visit to Ephesus.¹³

Luke the historian gives a vivid touch to his report of the disturbance in Ephesus by incidentally bringing in such particulars as indicate a familiarity with Ephesian life. He mentions the townclerk, the proconsuls, the asiarchs, the regular assembly, and the courts; and the inscriptions found and the discoveries made by excavation testify that the definite setting given to the narrative is in perfect harmony with the life of the city in Paul's day. It has been well said by Ramsay that "the more closely we are able to test the story in Acts, the more vivid and true to the situation and surroundings does it prove to be, and the more justified are we in pressing closely every inference from the little details that occur in it. I entertain the strong hope that the demonstration which has now been given of its accuracy in disputed points, will do away with all future doubt as to the faithfulness of the picture that it gives of Ephesian society in A. D. 57."

¹³ *The New Archeological Discoveries and Their Bearing Upon the New Testament*, pp. 472-474. By Camden M. Cobern. Funk and Wagnalls Company.

XXII

THE LORD CÆSAR AND THE LORD CHRIST

It is a most suggestive fact that while these unrivaled discoveries of the monuments and inscriptions of the ancient world have in scores of instances cast discredit upon the accuracy of classical historians and ancient writers, they have served only to put in clearer light the remarkable knowledge and scrupulous exactness of the New Testament writers.

—CAMDEN M. COBERN.

THE discovery of Greek papyri in great numbers and of many Greek inscriptions, written in the centuries immediately preceding and immediately following the birth of Christ, has had a drastic effect upon the views held not so long ago by many critics concerning the New Testament Greek and the time of the writing of the documents composing the New Testament. Before the papyri and the inscriptions became available for study it was held even by conservative scholars that the language of the New Testament was a peculiar Biblical Greek, quite different from that used in other documents, and that it contained many so-called Hebraisms or adaptations of Hebrew idioms. On this basis special grammars and lexicons of "New Testament" Greek were prepared containing learned and rather extended discussions of the peculiarities of the language, and the conclusions thus reached sometimes shaped the theology of humbler scholars. In recent years, however, the spade of the explorer has dug up the evidence which has shattered all these theories and at the same time has buried the fragments too deep for recovery.

To Adolph Deissmann, the German scholar, is due the credit of being the first to recognize the true nature of New Testament Greek. In the opening chapter of his most valuable book, *Light From the Ancient East*, he discusses at length "The Problem—Discovery and Nature of the New Texts," meaning by "the new texts" the Greek papyri, inscriptions and ostraca which have been brought to light in the last fifty years. The next

chapter carries the title "The Language of the New Testament Illustrated From the New Texts," and in it he presents the conclusion which he has drawn from the facts set forth in the first chapter:

As we study the New Testament on the lines indicated at the close of the preceding chapter, the first great impression we receive is that the language to which we are accustomed in the New Testament is on the whole just the kind of Greek that simple, unlearned folk of the Roman Imperial period were in the habit of using. The non-literary written memorials of that age at length have opened our eyes to the true linguistic position of the New Testament. That is the first and most easily demonstrated of the services rendered us by the new texts. . . .

New Testament philology has been revolutionized; and probably all the workers concerned in it both on the Continent and in English-speaking countries are by this time agreed that the starting-point for the philological investigation of the New Testament must be the language of the non-literary papyri, ostraca, and inscriptions. . . .

In the Roman Imperial period the language of the great world was Greek, which numbered more speakers than the Latin with its millions. . . . In this Hellenised world, however, men no longer spoke local dialects of Greek. The world had become unified, and men spoke no more the ancient Doric, or Æolic, Ionic, or Attic, but a *single* Greek international language, one *common* tongue. The precise origin of this international Greek, which it is usual to refer to as the *Koiné* ('common' language), has not been made out, nor need it detain us here. The fact remains that in the period which gave birth to Christianity there *was* an international Greek language.¹

An American scholar, who deals with this matter quite fully, writes of "Dr. Deissmann's epoch-making discovery concerning the papyri," and makes an interesting comment on it:

It was Deissmann who caught the revolutionary truth that the Gospels were a 'people's book' written in the dialect of the middle classes in the vernacular of the home and the shop; written in a style which no literary man of that day would have permitted himself to use, but which did appeal to the masses. An examination of the papyri written contemporaneously with the New Testament proved, according to Deissmann, that the New Testament books, with perhaps the exception of two or three, were written to working men in the language of the working man, the Bible authors freely using the colloquialisms and even the solecisms of the market-place. This was a theory which at first seemed too good to be true. It meant that Wycliffe only did for Eng-

¹ *Light From the Ancient East*, pp. 62-66. By Adolph Deissmann. Hodder and Stoughton.

land what Matthew and Mark did for the Roman world. Christianity from the beginning spoke the language of the peasant. Its crooked grammar and mixed orthography and peculiar syntax, upon which have been built so many theological castles in the air, are all found paralleled exactly in the letters and other familiar documents of that first century. This common Greek (the *Koiné*) was spoken everywhere throughout the entire Roman Empire, and even our early church titles, such as 'bishop,' 'presbyter,' 'deacon,' etc., were well-known official names used in the trade unions and other corporations, religious and civil, of that era. This contention, which seemed at first utterly unbelievable, has now inside of twenty years gained the adhesion of almost every great living Greek scholar and has caused the re-writing of the New Testament lexicon and grammar.²

An illustration of the re-writing of the New Testament grammar is found in *A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research*, by A. T. Robertson. This is a monumental work of 1367 large pages in which the whole subject is canvassed, and nearly all of the more important Greek words used in the New Testament are considered, with the citation of the passages where they are used. Other shorter grammars have also been written, and so the results of the study of this subject by a number of scholars have been made available to the average student of the Greek language. In a general way the original claim of Dr. Deissmann has been satisfactorily established, and the view held for a long period that New Testament Greek was a unique dialect has been practically abandoned.

But of what real benefit is this careful comparison between the ancient documents and the language of the New Testament to the average reader of the English translation of the New Testament? This is a very proper question to ask, and it deserves more than a paragraph or two in reply. It would require a good-sized book to make a full answer, as has already been demonstrated by different writers who have dealt with this interesting subject. Perhaps the most profitable way of presenting the matter will be to make a brief study of some of the leading New Testament words.

Every student of Roman history is familiar with the fact that in a general way the Roman emperors were tolerant of a variety of heathen religions practised by the peoples whom they con-

² *The New Archeological Discoveries and Their Bearing Upon the New Testament*, pp. 30, 31. By Camden M. Cobern. Funk and Wagnalls Company.

quered, even providing a place in the Pantheon at Rome for a goodly number of foreign deities. Why then was Christianity an unlawful religion? and why were Christians persecuted by different emperors? Because in its very nature Christianity was different from every form of heathenism in that it was an exclusive religion. This characteristic mark of Christianity is clearly stated by the apostle Paul: "We know that no idol is anything in the world, and that there is no God but one. For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or on earth; as there are gods many, and lords many; yet to us there is one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we unto him; and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things, and we through him." 1 Cor. 8: 4-6.

In these words a vital issue between Christianity and every heathen religion is uncompromisingly declared. The final test of this issue was applied when the emperor was deified and the terms god and lord were definitely applied to him. That this was really done is proven by different inscriptions. Here is one example:

Under Domitian (i. e., in New Testament terms, in the Johannine period) we have the first example in the cult of the Cæsars. Domitian himself arranges to be called 'our lord and god.' Received not without protest at the outset, in the third century the phrase becomes quite official, but its use had continued meantime in the East, as shown by an inscription from the Tauric Chersonese in which the Emperor Antoninus Pius is called 'our god and lord.'³

When Thomas was compelled to believe by the manifested presence of Jesus after the resurrection, he cried out, "My Lord, and my God." This is the foundation of the Christian creed. To apply these terms to any human being is a repudiation of Christianity. A document has been discovered at Thebes in Egypt, written in 63 A. D., which is dated "In the year nine of Nero the lord." Another document is dated "In the year 12 of Nero the lord." It is of significant interest to remember that the apostle Paul, who acknowledged only "one Lord, Jesus Christ," was put to death in the reign of Nero who was officially designated as "the lord" by the Roman world. The term

³ *Light From the Ancient East*, p. 362. By Adolph Deissmann. Hodder and Stoughton.

"Lord" applied to Jesus of Nazareth occurs hundreds of times in the New Testament, and His lordship was emphasized in the preaching of the apostles. Paul declared, "We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus as Lord" (2 Cor. 4: 5), and to the Gentiles assembled in the house of Cornelius, the centurion, Peter affirmed of Christ, "He is Lord of all" (Acts 10: 36). Not only so, but the experience of the spiritual lordship of Jesus Christ became the real test of genuine Christianity, as we read: "No man can say, Jesus is Lord, but in the Holy Spirit" (1 Cor. 12: 3). All this teaching was a direct and positive denial of the claim of the Roman emperor that he was lord and god, as set forth in the inscriptions, and where these conflicting claims were insisted upon, it was inevitable that persecution would follow. We may profitably recall in this connection the fact that one of the tests applied by Pliny the Younger to determine whether those charged with being Christians were really such, was the requirement that they should worship the statue of the emperor with incense, thus acknowledging him as lord. In his letter to the emperor Trajan he stated: "Those who denied that they were Christians or ever had been, when, after me, they invoked the gods and worshipped with incense and wine your statue which I had ordered to be brought for that purpose along with the images of the gods, and, further, reviled Christ—things which it is said that no real Christians will do under any compulsion—I considered should be dismissed."⁴

In absolute opposition to such worship of the emperor as lord is the inspired instruction, "Sanctify in your hearts Christ as Lord" (1 Peter 3: 15), with the definite assurance: "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord, . . . thou shalt be saved" (Rom. 10: 9). The lordship of Christ is exclusive, and there can be no rival lord.

After Constantine removed the capital of the Roman Empire from Rome to Constantinople in the early part of the fourth century, the bishop of Rome gradually became the most commanding leader in the West, and as the Western Empire tottered to its fall in the fifth century, it was quite natural that he should be regarded as the *de facto* emperor. It is therefore perhaps not surprising that he should be given the titles formerly applied to the Roman emperor, as we read: "The Pope is as it were God

⁴ *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 14th Edition, Vol. XVIII, p. 79.

on earth, sole sovereign of the faithful of Christ, chief king of kings.”⁵ And so the issue which was raised in the early days of Christianity is an issue today. Shall we acknowledge any other as Lord than the eternal Lord, or any other as God than “the eternal God”? The title “reverend,” which is so generally applied to Roman Catholic priests and to Protestant clergymen, is the English equivalent of the Greek *Sebastos* (Latin Augustus), found in a Greek inscription which is dated “In the year 19 of Tiberius Cæsar Augustus.” So the Roman emperors were designated as “lord,” “god,” and “reverend.” Would it not be better to confine such terms to the one true and living God?

When Jesus of Nazareth was declared by Peter to be “the Son of the living God,” He accepted the statement without protest, and when He was being examined by the High Priest He positively affirmed that He was the Son of God. But to be the offspring of deity was also claimed by the Roman emperor. “When the author,” says Deissman, “came upon the expression for the first time in a non-Christian document (Fayyum, 22nd August, 7 A. D.) where without doubt the Emperor Augustus is described as son of god, he had no idea how very frequently the title is used for Augustus in the inscriptions. Since that time he has become convinced that the matter stands thus: son of god [in Greek] is a translation of the *divi filius* [son of a god] which is equally frequent in Latin inscriptions.” To the Christian Jesus was the Son of God in such a unique sense that to apply the same term to the emperor was to him nothing short of blasphemy:

The title ‘Lord’ as given to Jesus seems from the papyri to have a deeper meaning than was supposed. The emperors, when deified (first century and later), were addressed as ‘God,’ ‘Son of God,’ ‘Lord,’ ‘Saviour of the World,’ etc., and this gives new point to the use of these titles for Jesus. We now see that the term *Kurios Iesous* (‘Lord Jesus’) was an ascription of deity to Him, and such as might have been accounted an act of antagonism to the emperor’s claim. The exact phrase by which deity was ascribed to Jesus—‘Great God and Saviour’ (Tit. 2: 13; 2 Pet. 1: 1)—appears literally in an inscription of 2 B. C., giving the emperor this title.⁶

⁵ Ferraris’ *Ecclesiastical Dictionary*. Article on The Pope.

⁶ *The New Archeological Discoveries and Their Bearing Upon the New Testament*, p. 127. By Camden M. Cobern. Funk and Wagnalls Company.

So was the issue squarely raised between Christianity and the religion of the Roman Empire. So were Christians exposed to the charge of being disloyal to the emperor. It thus becomes clear why Polycarp suffered martyrdom rather than to confess the emperor as "Lord Cæsar."

The development of this cult of the Roman emperor is a matter of real interest and of no small significance. In the period just preceding the first advent of Christ confidence in the guidance and power of the heathen deities was gradually shaken, until, as has been plainly stated by writers upon this subject, some of the priests of paganism themselves ridiculed the rites which they publicly performed. At the same time there grew up a sort of longing for and expectation of the appearing of some outstanding leader who would introduce a new and a better order of things in the world. Of course the devout Jews based this expectation upon the prophecies of the Messiah, and they looked "for the consolation of Israel." "The ferment caused by such an expectation can be traced over all the known world. It is very marked in the inscriptions which still remain." It was, then, quite in harmony with the widespread feeling that "wise-men from the east came to Jerusalem, saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews?" With the growth of the empire there seemed to be embodied in the emperor that majesty which suggested that the head of the Roman state might be, nay was, the expected saviour of the world. "Behind the visible majesty of the emperor there lay all the prestige of the unrivalled history of Rome. The might of possession belonged to it, and all the visible forces of the world were at his command." The thought found expression in the terms "lord," "god," and "saviour" which were applied to the emperor. Among the many inscriptions which testify to this deification of the emperor is this one referring to the birthday of Augustus, dated by W. M. Ramsay 9-4 B. C., at or near the very time when Jesus was born in Bethlehem:

This day has given the earth an entirely new aspect. The world would have gone to destruction had there not streamed forth from him who is now born a common blessing. Rightly does he judge who recognizes in this birthday the beginning of life and of all the powers of life; now is that ended when men pitied themselves for being born. . . . From no other day does the individual or the community receive such benefit as from this natal day, full of blessing to all. The

providence which rules over all has filled this man with such gifts for the salvation of the world as designate him the Saviour for us and for the coming generations; of wars will he make an end, and establish all things worthily. By his appearing are the hopes of our forefathers fulfilled; not only has he surpassed the good deeds of men of earlier time, but it is impossible that one greater than he can ever appear. The birthday of God has brought to the world glad tidings that are bound up in him. From his birthday a new era begins.⁷

Some might question whether this was the expression of a sincere conviction, or whether it was merely a collection of complimentary sentences phrased in courtly language. According to the estimate of Ramsay, "All this was not merely the language of courtly panegyric. It was in a way thoroughly sincere, with all the sincerity that the people of that over-developed and precocious time, with their artificial, highly stimulated, rather feverish intellect were capable of feeling."

What wondrous significance is given by this inscription to the announcement made by the angel to the shepherds on the plains of Bethlehem at very nearly the same time! Of the emperor it was stated, "The birthday of God has brought to the world glad tidings that are bound up in him." Is it not plain that "the god of this world" was thus seeking to put a mere man in the place of the God-man, and to satisfy the expectation of the coming of a deliverer by substituting the power of the visible kingdom for the power of the invisible kingdom? But the counterfeit was authoritatively exposed in the announcement by the heavenly messenger of the genuine good tidings: "Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all the people: for there is born to you this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord." Glad tidings indeed! A real Saviour! The Lord of heaven come down to share the lot of humanity and to provide an all-sufficient ransom for an enslaved race! This is the very heart of the Christian gospel. From *His* birthday a new era did surely begin, concerning which He Himself declared to His disciples: "Verily I say unto you, that many prophets and righteous men desired to see the things which ye see, and saw them not; and to hear the things which ye hear, and heard them not." They saw the true Lord and heard the good tidings from His mouth.

⁷ Cited in *Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics*. Edited by James Hastings, Vol. III, p. 55.

The Roman empire with its counterfeit lord gradually declined and finally collapsed, but Christianity, with its crucified and risen Lord, survived. Apostasies and reformations have occurred during the centuries, but the time is now near at hand when the announcement of "great voices in heaven" will be fulfilled: "the kingdom of the world is become the kingdom of our Lord, and of his Christ: and he shall reign for ever and ever." Rev. 11: 15.

Another helpful result of the discovery of the Greek papyri and inscriptions must not be overlooked. The date of the writing of the documents constituting the New Testament has been a subject of long controversy, the tendency of the critics being to advocate for a number of them a period later than the first century, A. D. But the study of the papyri and inscriptions of the second and third centuries has furnished the information which disproves the claim of these critics. Here are the facts:

While few dated papyri come from the first century before Christ, great numbers come from the two centuries preceding and the first, second and third centuries after Christ, so that for the first time undated documents can now be generally assigned with considerable certainty to their proper century. The formation of the letters and the character of the abbreviations and other changes in handwriting and orthography make it as easy to decide between a first century and a third century Greek manuscript as between a sixteenth century and a nineteenth century English manuscript. Thus paleography adds its weight to the former strong internal argument. The grammar and popular phraseology show equal changes, so that a new argument inexpressibly strong has suddenly arisen, compelling skeptical scholars almost irresistibly to date the New Testament documents in the first century.⁸

We have briefly considered the question of the deification of the Roman emperor and the persecution inflicted upon the Christians who applied the terms Lord, God, and Saviour to another person exclusively, according to the teaching of the New Testament documents. In the next chapter we will continue the study of some of the other outstanding words of the New Testament and their significance as used by the Christian writers of the first century.

⁸ *The New Archæological Discoveries and Their Bearing Upon the New Testament*, pp. 98, 99. By Camden M. Cobern. Funk and Wagnalls Company.

LIGHT ON NEW TESTAMENT WORDS

A study of the texts of the Roman Empire has yielded results bearing on the position of the New Testament and primitive Christianity in the history of religion. They have taught us to reconstruct with fairness and greater accuracy the popular religious environment in which the great religious transformation took place. They have sharpened our vision for innumerable details which primitive Christianity took over and further developed from its surroundings in the East and in the West. But chiefly we have been taught to regard primitive Christianity not with dogmatic, theological eyes, but with sympathy for simple religion, especially for the vigorous religion of the masses. Thus we have learnt to recognize that the character of Jesus is wholly, that of St. Paul principally, untheological and pre-dogmatic; and generally to recognize the lofty simplicity of primitive Christianity.—New Light on the New Testament, ADOLPH DEISSMANN. Chas. Scribner's Sons.

WE have already found that in the century following the birth of Christ there was an international Greek language called the *koiné*, or the "common" tongue. It was in this language of the people that the documents composing the New Testament were written. New thoughts, new experiences, and new relationships were the inevitable result of the birth of Christianity, but instead of introducing strange expressions in which to convey these new things, the writers adopted the words familiar to the people of that time, but filled them with a Christian content. Some examples of this transformation of terms will now be given.

The Greek word *ekklesia*, transliterated into the Latin *ecclesia*, and appearing in the English words *ecclesiastic* and *ecclesiastical*, originally signified a duly called assembly of Greek citizens. Later it was applied to any assembly of the people, and is so used in Acts 19: 32, 39, and 41, where it is translated "assembly" in the English text. As the gospel was preached throughout the Roman world and Christians increased in numbers, some term was needed by which to designate the separate companies, as well as the united company, of believers. Instead of coining a new word for this purpose the well-known Greek word *ekklesia* was

adopted. "This self-bestowed name rested on the certain conviction that God had separated from the world His 'saints' in Christ, and had 'called' or 'convened' them to an assembly, which was 'God's assembly.'" The citizens of the heavenly kingdom were thus convened by their divine ruler. In the year 103 A. D. an inscription was found at Ephesus in which this word *ekklesia* appeared in the Latin form *ecclesia*, showing that the Greek word was not translated into Latin but simply transliterated. Commenting upon this significant fact Deissmann remarks:

The word which thus penetrated into the West is one of the indelible marks of the origin of Christianity. Just as the words *amen*, *abba*, etc., are the Semitic birth-marks, so the word *ecclesia* (and many others besides) points for all time to the fact that the beginnings of Christianity must be sought also in the *Greek East*.¹

The Bible is the book of redemption. In it we find the story of the work of God in redemption through His Son Jesus Christ. We should therefore naturally expect that the words redemption and redeem would be emphasized in the Scriptures, and such is the case. Furthermore, it is redemption by blood which is emphasized. On that night when death claimed so many in the land of Egypt, it was the blood of the slain lamb sprinkled at the entrances to their homes which saved the children of Israel and brought deliverance from their bondage. Later they were designated in the song "unto Jehovah" as "the people that thou hast redeemed," and "hast purchased." Jehovah is accordingly revealed to Israel as "thy redeemer," and "thy saviour." And so when Jehovah was manifested in the flesh, the angel who announced His coming to the shepherds designated Him as "a saviour," and the two disciples on the way to Emmaus after the crucifixion expressed their disappointment by saying, "We hoped that it was he who should redeem Israel."

It was Jesus Himself who declared that the purpose of His mission to this world was "to give his life a ransom for many," and the New Testament writers in unfolding this subject stated in clear language the ransom or purchase price which was paid for our redemption: "Knowing that ye were redeemed, not with

¹ *Light From the Ancient East*, p. 113. By Adolph Deissmann. Hodder and Stoughton.

corruptible things, with silver or gold, . . . but with precious blood, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot, even the blood of Christ." Thus the redeemed became "a people for God's own possession," and so Jesus referred to His disciples as "his own," and it is written, "Ye are not your own; for ye were bought with a price."

The idea of redemption by the payment of some price was a familiar one in the Roman world in the time of Christ and the apostles, but the redemption with which they were familiar was the purchase of a slave from his master "for freedom." Here are the particulars concerning the method of such a redemption:

Among the various ways in which the manumission of a slave could take place by ancient law we find the solemn rite of fictitious purchase of the slave by some divinity. The owner comes with the slave to the temple, sells him there to the god, and receives the purchase money from the temple treasury, the slave having previously paid it in there out of his savings. The slave is now the property of the god; not, however, a slave of the temple, but a protégé of the god. Against all the world, especially his former master, he is a completely free man; at the utmost a few pious obligations to his old master are imposed upon him.

The rite takes place before witnesses; a record is taken, and often perpetuated on stone.

The usual form of these documents must have been extremely well known, because they are so numerous.²

The following translation of a Greek inscription made 200-199 B. C. and found on the wall at Delphi indicates the exact nature of the transaction when a slave thus acquired his freedom:

Apollo the Pythian *bought* from Sosibius of Amphissa, *for freedom*, a female slave, whose name is Nicæa, by race a Roman, *with a price* of three minæ of silver and a half-mina. Former seller according to the law; Eumnastus of Amphissa. The *price* he hath received. The purchase, however, Nicæa hath committed unto Apollo, *for freedom*.³

How impressive are the words "bought," "for freedom," "with a price"! How vivid and how full of meaning must the words of the apostle Paul have been to the members of the church at Corinth where the purchase of a slave for freedom was a common occurrence. Slavery to sin and Satan is just as real

² *Id.*, p. 322.

³ *Id.*, p. 323.

as was the slavery of the Greek to his master. The payment of a purchase price for redemption from sin is just as real as was the payment of money by the Greek slave. The freedom from sin secured by the payment of the purchase price is just as real as was the freedom which the Greek slave secured. The marked difference between the two transactions is that the Greek slave himself was able to provide the purchase price, and did so, but the sinner is utterly unable to pay the price of freedom, and Christ "gave himself for our sins," and now freedom is offered to us "without money and without price." "For freedom did Christ set us free: stand fast therefore, and be not entangled again in a yoke of bondage."

It is undoubtedly true that "the sacrifice of Christ as an atonement for sin is the great truth around which all other truths cluster," and it is therefore both interesting and instructive to consider the origin of the words which were used to present this central truth, and thus to learn the meaning which would be naturally attached to them by the early readers of the New Testament documents.

Writing to the Christians in Rome the apostle Paul speaks of "Christ Jesus, whom God set forth to be a propitiation, through faith, in his blood," thus presenting the atoning sacrifice of Christ. So the apostle John declares concerning Christ that "he is the propitiation for our sins," and again that God "sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." The two Greek words used by these writers are from the same root and have the same general meaning. We now inquire whether this word is found in any of the Greek inscriptions previous to its use in the New Testament, and if so, what idea was conveyed by it.

An inscription has been found on the base of a statue at Cos, a town at which the apostle Paul called on one of his missionary journeys, which states that the people erected the statue to the gods as a *hilastarion* (the word used by Paul) for the welfare of "the son of God," Augustus. This inscription was written before the time of Paul. Another inscription written in the imperial period has been discovered at the same place where the same word is used in the same sense. It is evident, then, that the word *hilastarion* was used by the Romans to define a gift made to the gods as a means of securing their favor. When, therefore, the New Testament writers employed the same word to

designate the propitiatory gift which God set forth as the way of obtaining His forgiveness and righteousness, viz., His only begotten Son, they did not introduce a strange term, but simply gave a new and Christian interpretation to a word already in use in connection with the worship of the heathen gods. An interesting comment is here given:

The author considers it quite impossible that Paul should not have known the word in this sense: if he had not become familiar with it by living in Cilicia, he had certainly read it here and there in his wanderings through the empire, when he stood before the monuments of paganism and pensively contemplated what the piety of a dying civilization had to offer to its known or unknown gods. Similarly the Christians of the Capital, whether one sees in them, as the misleading distinction goes, Jewish Christians or Heathen Christians, would know what a *hilastarion* was in their time.

God has *publicly set forth* the crucified Christ in His blood in view of the Cosmos—to the Jews a stumbling block, to the Gentiles foolishness, to Faith a *hilastarion*. The crucified Christ is the votive-gift of the divine love for the salvation of men. Elsewhere it is human hands which dedicate to the deity a dead image of stone in order to gain his favor; here the God of grace Himself erects the consoling image,—for the skill and power of men are not sufficient. . . . God's favor must be obtained—He Himself fulfils the preliminary conditions; men can do nothing at all, they cannot so much as believe—God does all in Christ: that is the religion of Paul, and our passage in Romans is but another expression of this same mystery of salvation.⁴

In the gospel we find the essential good news that God has dealt with sin in such a way that He can remove it from the repentant sinner, and at the same time maintain His own righteousness. This is a very real transaction. While sin is not a tangible object which can be seen and handled, yet it is a tremendous fact, and separation from it must be an actual experience. How was this deliverance expressed in language so that it might be clearly understood?

It is well known that Egypt is a dry country, and that irrigation is a most important and necessary feature of agriculture. The waters of the Nile flowing in the artificial canals would be of no benefit to the dry soil so long as it is confined within the banks of these passageways; there must therefore be some method of releasing them so that they can be carried away.

⁴ *Bible Studies*, pp. 131–133. By Adolph Deissmann. Chas. Scribner's Sons.

Now the Greek word used for describing the release of the waters by opening the sluices of the canals is the very word adopted by the New Testament writers to convey the idea of the remission, or sending away, of sins. The common use of the term as applied to irrigation would illustrate and make very real to the people of that time what is involved in the forgiveness or releasing of sins. In a papyrus of the Ptolemaic period concerning irrigation this word is found used in the sense indicated above. It is of interest to note that on the Rosetta stone the verb from the same root is employed referring to a certain king who remitted some taxes. Taxes thus remitted were not required to be paid. The citizen was free from them. So the sinner is freed from the sins which have been remitted. The burden is released from him just as really as the waters are released from the canals when the sluices are opened. Thus was a common word pressed into service, a Christian application given to it, and it was used with which to express a central redemptive experience.

There is a passage in *Revelation* which has been the subject of much discussion: "And he causeth all, the small and the great, and the rich and the poor, and the free and the bond, that there be given them a mark on their right hand, or upon their forehead; and that no man should be able to buy or to sell, save he that hath the mark, even the name of the beast or the number of his name. Here is wisdom. He that hath understanding, let him count the number of the beast; for it is the number of a man; and his number is six hundred and sixty-six" (Rev. 13: 16-18). The power which imposes this mark is symbolized by the beast which "had two horns like unto a lamb," mentioned in the eleventh verse. The Greek word which is here translated "mark" is *charagma*, which is defined in the classical dictionary as meaning "any mark engraven, imprinted." We may very properly ask, What was expressed by this term in the Roman world at the time when the apostle John wrote his document at the end of the first century A. D.?

Again we are indebted to the papyri and other material objects for the help which they give in the attempt to answer this question. Numerous papyri have been found, bills of sale and other documents, which give evidence of having had a seal stamped upon them authenticating the document, if it should be called in question. But of much greater significance is "a circular stamp-

plate of soft limestone" which is now in the Museum at Berlin, and which has upon its face a Greek inscription reading thus when translated into English: "In the 35th year of Cæsar," i. e., in 5-6 A. D. A variety of papyri bear a similar stamp. "All these imperial seals, including that of Augustus, have this in common, viz., that they contain the name of the emperor." Now a document has been discovered which discloses the name of this imperial seal. Our interest is greatly stirred when we learn that it was designated as *charagma*, the mark of the emperor. "*Charagma* is the name of the imperial seal," says Deissmann, "giving the year and the name of the reigning emperor (possibly also his effigy), and found on bills of sale and similar documents of the 1st and 2nd centuries." One bill of sale belonging to the 12th year of the emperor Claudius (52-53 A. D.), when the apostle John was past middle life, uses this word *charagma*, or mark, in harmony with the foregoing explanation of its meaning. It thus appears that the word *charagma*, or mark, was used in the days of the apostle John to describe the stamp authenticating legal documents, and that this stamp contained the name of the emperor. "Seals were set on sacks of grain to guarantee the correctness of the contents and there was a mark (*charagma*), containing the emperor's name and the year of his reign, which was necessary upon documents relating to buying and selling, and this mark was technically known as the 'seal' (Comp. Rev. 13: 16, 17; 14: 9, 11; 19: 20, etc.). It was the credential of the royal document making it legal." (Cobern.)

We note that in the time when the prophecy of John is fulfilled "no man should be able to buy or to sell, save he that hath the mark, even the name of the beast or the number of his name." Here we observe that the number of the name of the beast was equivalent to his name, and could be used in place of it. To the people of our time this is a mysterious idea. What is meant by the number of his name? Was it hidden from the understanding of the people of the time of John the apostle? What explanation of it can now be given? Again we must appeal to the papyri.

The figures now generally employed to indicate numbers were unknown to the Greek speaking world. They used the letters of their alphabet, a definite numerical value being assigned to each

letter when thus employed. It thus came about that when one desired to refer to a person and yet to conceal his usual name, he could do so by mentioning the number which represented the total numerical value of all the letters composing his name. The excavation of Pompeii has brought to light so-called wall-scribblings, made at the very period when the New Testament was written, which show that such numerical puzzles were then current. Two examples are cited and the Greek translated by Deissmann. The first one runs thus: "Amarimnus thought upon his lady Harmonia for good. The number of her honorable name is 45."

The name Harmonia is evidently used as a sort of endearing title, while the real name is to be found by combining the letters whose total numerical value is 45.

In the second case a lover gives vent to his warmth of feeling in these words: "I love her whose number is 545."

From these examples it is evident that in the time of the apostle John such a thing as designating a person by the number of his name was not unknown, and that it was even done by the common people. In *Revelation* John stated plainly that the number of the name of the beast which he mentioned was 666, i. e., the total of the numerical value of the letters of his name was 666, and in this numerical puzzle his real name was concealed.

That the beast, the number of whose name is given in this prophecy, represents the Roman papacy becomes clear when the specifications here listed are found to be historically fulfilled in that politico-religious organization. We may therefore confidently expect that some title describing the papacy will be found whose numerical value, when interpreted according to the custom followed in the time of John, will be exactly 666. Has such a title been discovered? Many suggestions have been made by various writers in the effort to give an affirmative answer to this question. The following solution has been offered by a well-known interpreter of prophecy:

The number of the beast, says the prophecy, "is the number of a man;" and if it is to be derived from a name or title, the natural conclusion would be that it must be the name or title of some particular man. The most plausible expression we have seen suggested as containing the number of the beast, is the title . . . *Vicarius Filii Dei*, "Vicegerent of the Son of God." Taking the letters out of this title

which the Latins used as numerals, and giving them their numerical value, we have just 666. Thus we have V, 5; I, 1; C, 100 (a and r not used as numerals); I, 1; U (formerly the same as V), 5, (s and f not used as numerals); I, 1; L, 50; I, 1; I, 1; D, 500 (e not used as a numeral); I, 1. Adding these numbers together, we have just 666.⁵

While it throws no particular light upon the question under discussion, yet it is worth noting that the numerical value of the name Jesus, written in Greek, is 888. If, as seems clear from the connection, the beast whose number is 666 is an opposer of Jesus the conquering Lamb of the book of Revelation, we are justified in declaring that the triple eight is the irresistible answer to the triple six.

The same apostle John who foresaw that the time would come when it would be necessary for those who would engage in commerce to accept from the beast his mark (*charagma*), containing his name or the number of his name, was also shown a group of the followers of the Lamb standing with Him on Mount Zion, "having his name, and the name of his Father, written on their foreheads." A vital issue is presented in these statements. Which shall be accepted, the mark (the name) of the beast, or the name of the slain Lamb and the name of His Father? The choice made indicates the side taken in the great controversy between the Lamb and the beast, and determines the eternal destiny of those who thus choose; for those who "come off victorious from the beast, and from his image, and from the number of his name," are seen later "standing by the sea of glass, having harps of God;" while the beast and the false prophet who attempted to enforce his mark, "were cast alive into the lake of fire that burneth with brimstone." We face the issue today. Shall we accept the mark of the beast, or the name of the slain Lamb and His Father? This is the time for a decision.

⁵ *Daniel and the Revelation*, p. 624. By Uriah Smith. Review and Herald Publishing Association, Takoma Park, D. C.

XXIV

A REVIEW AND AN ESTIMATE OF THE TESTIMONY OF ARCHEOLOGY

*Oriental archeology is a subject which has come with such vast strides to the front, has been fraught with such surprises, and now covers so immense a territory, that any book which furnishes an intelligent interpretation of its results is sure of a hearty welcome. Much more is this the case when what is proposed is to illustrate how the new light streaming in from past millenniums in the East affects our estimate of God's holy Word, and our judgment on the keen and relentless, often also most reckless criticism which has in late years been applied to that Word.—*JAMES ORR, in *Introduction to The Deciding Voice of the Monuments in Biblical Criticism*, MELVIN GROVE KYLE.

WE have now taken a limited excursion in the field of archeology so far as it has a bearing upon the trustworthiness of the Scriptures. We have looked at some of the inscriptions, at more of the papyri, and at a few of the ostraca. We have noted the difference between the God who created all things by His word and the grotesque picture of the creative work of the gods of the Babylonians. We have considered the evidence now appealing to the eye which testifies to the flood in the time of Noah. We have examined the recently discovered foundation of the ancient tower of Babel. We have found that, according to the testimony of archeology, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph are not mere mythical names, used to represent certain ancient groups or tribes, but are real persons, the outstanding characters in early Biblical history.

The proofs that the children of Israel actually dwelt in Egypt, first as welcomed foreigners and later as slaves, and that, having been set free, they traveled from Egypt to Kadesh-Barnea by the way of the wilderness of Arabia, have been cited. Their delay in the wilderness, due to their apostasy, has seemed to fit into the historical circumstances at the time of the conquest of Palestine. Jericho and Ai, the first cities captured by Joshua in his notable campaign under special divine guidance, have been presented to our view after having been buried for many cen-

turies, and their ruins have testified to the accuracy of the Biblical record of their overthrow. Gezer, Kirjath-sepher and Hazor have been uncovered, and have borne their testimony to the reality of the Biblical history of that time. Of the greatest interest to us have been the recently discovered facts concerning ancient Jerusalem, "the city of the great King," the center of the government and the worship of undivided Israel.

We have examined the archeological evidence concerning the fulfilment of prophecy in the downfall of the Assyrian power, that agent used by Jehovah for the chastisement of his disobedient people. It has been a source of great satisfaction to us to find such indisputable proofs that Nebuchadnezzar carried on his campaigns in Palestine at the times and with the results set forth by the prophets and the chroniclers, and to consider the abundant proofs furnished by archeology that Daniel was a reliable historian. We have seen Belshazzar come forth from the oblivion to which the critics had assigned him, and take his place in authentic history as co-regent with his father Nabonidus and the defender of Babylon against the army of Cyrus. We have looked into the great hall where Belshazzar's feast was held, and have marked the wall on which the king saw with terror the handwriting which announced the doom of his kingdom. Other facts revealed by archeology, in addition to those here listed, have certified the accuracy of the historical features of the Old Testament, corroborating its record in many particulars. Moses and the prophets have been vindicated, while many of the claims of the higher critics have been shown to be without any sound foundation.

Our briefer study of some features of the New Testament documents in the light of the recently discovered texts has been equally satisfactory. The emphatic and persistent claim that Luke was guilty of a serious blunder in his account of the enrolment "made when Quirinius was governor of Syria," has been proven to be unwarranted, and his reliability as a historian has been satisfactorily established. The Ephesus where the apostle Paul showed the worthlessness of all hand-made gods, and where Demetrius and the other craftsmen attempted to maintain the reputation of their goddess by stirring up the mob, and incidentally to save their business from depression, has been made real to us by the spade of the explorer, and we have noted the

details concerning the theater which Paul was persuaded not to enter. Thus the nineteenth chapter of Acts assumes a pleasing vividness.

We have seen why the Roman emperors classed Christianity as an unlawful religion the profession of which might easily involve treason against the state, inasmuch as the emperors were deified and "the Lord Christ" became the rival of "the Lord Cæsar." The monuments and the inscriptions have testified to us of the reality of this conflict.

We have, I am sure, been greatly helped in a better understanding and appreciation of the New Testament documents as we have noted that they were written in the language of the common people, using even the colloquialisms so familiar in the homes and the marketplaces. The local coloring attached to some words of special import when read in the first century has been made clear to us, and some language which may have seemed figurative to us has been found to be based upon everyday occurrences, quite familiar to the converts from paganism.

It should be emphasized that all the researches of the last century which have proved so helpful in many ways, have not discovered a new gospel or discredited the old gospel. Nothing hitherto unknown and essential to the salvation of the soul has been revealed by the spade of the explorer or by the reader of the inscriptions in ancient or modern characters. The simple but fundamental truths of the gospel of the grace of God have been sufficiently apprehended through all the centuries to give personal victory over sin, and to bring peace and rest to unknown millions of troubled hearts. Every successive era, however, has seen such an interpretation of the age-old gospel and such an application of it to the need of the time as would fully meet such new perversions of the truth as might abound, and thus maintain the Christian faith. In this field archeology has rendered a distinct and very valuable aid. Says Hooper:

The archeologist is in a position of peculiar advantage. The spade and the pick are indiscriminate instruments of exposure; they are no respecter of persons. They bring to the light of day writings and records of domestic and national life of former ages, and present them for the keenest scrutiny. In the past, men lived; kings reigned; houses were built; letters were written; records were kept; battles were fought; utensils for domestic, industrial, agricultural, and military use were

manufactured. They bear silent and unimpeachable witness either for or against the Bible. If these contradict the Bible record, we may be fully assured that there will be no delay in having them brought on to the witness stand to bear testimony against the Bible. Though there has been a century of more or less active search, there has not been a single instance in which the Biblical record has not been consistently and in many instances strikingly and even dramatically sustained.

Of course we do not claim that material objects, whether found in the ancient or the modern world, can demonstrate spiritual truth. It is just as true now as ever before that "we walk by faith, not by sight," and the object of saving faith must always be a Person, the living God, and not dead things. Nevertheless, it is just as true that—

*"The heavens declare the glory of God;
And the firmament sheweth his handiwork.
Day unto day uttereth speech,
And night unto night sheweth knowledge.
There is no speech nor language;
Their voice is not heard.
Their line is gone out through all the earth,
And their words to the end of the world."*

The voices from the rocks and the dustheaps of ancient lands addressed to the intellectual man cannot take the place of the voice of God speaking to the spiritual man, but their testimony should not be disregarded. "For the invisible things of him since the creation of the world are clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made, even his everlasting power and divinity; that they may be without excuse." In this time when the written word of God is so sadly neglected, and an organized effort is being made to prejudice the minds of the many against it by misrepresenting its spirit and real meaning, it is certainly an evidence of divine compassion that just at this time so much weighty evidence which has been hidden for many generations, should be made available corroborating the accuracy of the Scriptures in the very many instances where they deal with the facts of human history which can be substantiated by the statements of other writers, or by the testimony of material objects uncovered by the spade. In this time of the greatest perplexity, when the wisdom of the world is confounded, when the most pressing problems are left unsolved, and when a world-wide dis-

tress is deepening, those who have ears to hear will hear the many voices testifying that God is, that His written word is worthy of confidence, and calling men everywhere to find refuge in Him before His matchless glory, long veiled by His mercy, shall burst in destroying power upon a rebellious world. Of course more is needed in the preparation for the approaching crisis in divine and human affairs than the mere intellectual acceptance of the voice of nature declaring the existence of God and proclaiming His almighty power; for—

*“ A man may know all about the rocks,
And his heart remain as hard as they;
He may know all about the winds,
And be the sport of passions as fierce as they;
He may know all about the sea,
And his soul resemble its troubled waters which cannot find rest;
He may know all about the stars,
And be as the meteor
Whose light after a brief and brilliant career
Is to be consumed in eternal night;
A man may know how to rule the elements,
And yet not know how to rule his spirit;
He may know how to turn aside the crashing thunderbolt,
But not the wrath of God from his own guilty head;
He may know many secrets and understand many hidden things,
He may have all the knowledge of a Newton, a Watt, a Laplace,
But if he have not a personal knowledge of the love of God
Brought near to sinful men through Jesus Christ,
What will it profit him? ”*

We must clearly differentiate between confidence in the reliability of the Scriptures when they are recording historical facts, and that personal faith in the God of the Scriptures which leads one to surrender all to His revealed will. At the same time, confidence in the reliability of the Scriptures is a necessary preliminary to saving faith. We may exercise all five of our senses in dealing with the material objects of antiquity unearthed by the spade, and we may thus secure valuable information which corroborates much of the history recorded in the Bible, but this does not necessarily involve a trustful acceptance of Christ as the Saviour from sin. For this experience the sixth sense—faith—is demanded, by the exercise of which we deal with invisible Persons and invisible things with the same degree of reality as we deal

with the material world. By faith Moses acted "as seeing him who is invisible." But faith is to be distinguished from mere sentiment or feeling. "Belief cometh of hearing and hearing by the word of Christ." There is thus a reasonable basis for faith. "Genuine faith has its foundation in the promises and provisions of the Scriptures."

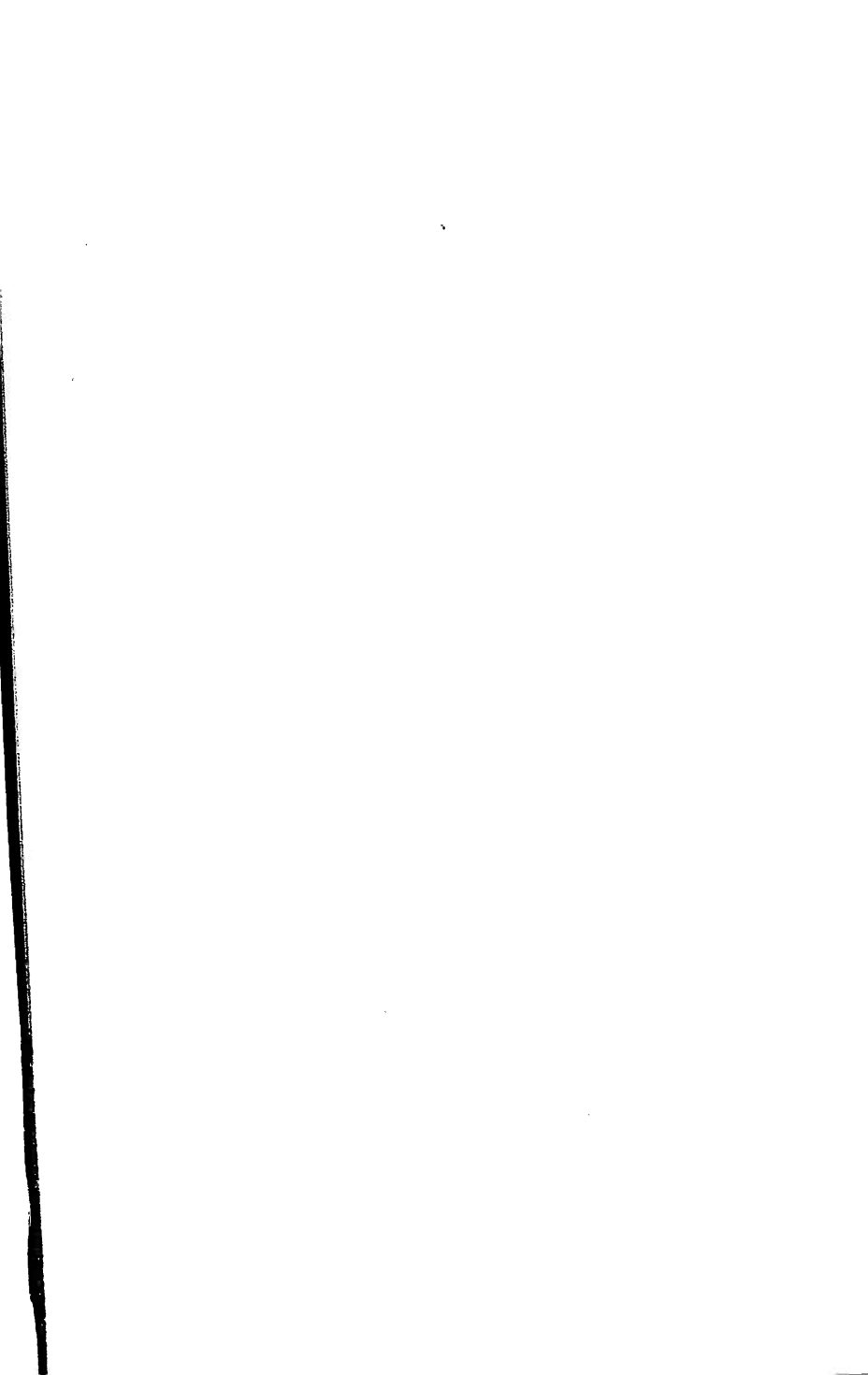
It is the part of archeology to contribute such facts as will aid in providing this reasonable basis for faith, but it must not be pressed beyond its proper sphere. The spade has dug up inscriptions, papyri and ostraca, which testify to the historical accuracy of the Scriptures, and invite and encourage faith, but the spade cannot dig up faith. The study of material things, ancient and modern, may supply sufficient knowledge to justify faith, but "he who waits for entire knowledge before he will exercise faith, cannot receive blessing from God." The words of Jesus to Thomas should be thoughtfully noted: "Because thou hast seen me, hast thou believed? blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed."

It is the earnest hope of the author that those who have followed him through these pages will be led by the facts here set forth to an increasing confidence in the reliability of the word of the living God which will be an aid to saving faith.

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